**Model A: Utility of the Future Today Organizational Culture Narrative**

**Charlotte Water NC**



**ORGANIZATIONAL CULTURE NARRATIVE:**

* Proactive leadership that engages in both internal organizational and broader external community priorities
* Establishes a participatory, collaborative organization dedicated to continual learning, improvement, and innovation
* Workforce and leadership development program in place to assure recruitment, retention, and competency of utility staff relative to a Utility of the Future business model. Development program includes a leadership and management skills training program that provides both formal and informal leadership opportunities for employees
* Employee “in-reach” program established to share work experiences and ensure greater understanding of the utility’s key strategy relative to the Utility of the Future business model
* Innovation initiatives adopted that encourage risk-taking, and that are adequately funded and staffed
* EUM-based continual improvement program in place
* Established Senior Leadership Team actively engaged in continuous improvement initiatives such as ISO 14001, 9001and NELAP/ISO 17025
* Utilizes the guiding principles of Honesty, Effort and Energy, Care and Knowledge as a foundation for how to plan, perform and evaluate the work that is done.
* Innovative partnership with UNCC developed an acoustic technology called Sewer Line Rapid Assessment Tool that determines impairment of sewer lines without going through the costly and time consuming inspection process utilizing more common technologies.
* Leveraging vacancies as opportunities for employee growth using temporary promotions, allowing employees to "sample" jobs outside of their traditional work.
* Merging operations and support groups to enhance overall performance and employee learning
* Providing instruction and coaching to employees around how to apply for promotions, prepare a resume, interview, and other skills need to advance their career.
* Holding facilitated Leadership Team retreats periodically to strengthen relationships, reset priorities and focus efforts
* Employees participate as mentors and mentees in City-led mentoring program (Shared Leadership Learning program) designed to develop leadership skills and offer exposure to different perspectives and issues.

*Performance Measures & Results*

Meet all requirements of the Safe Drinking Water Act and Clean Water Act - Target 100% compliance - Result 99.9%. Recipient of NACWA Platinum, Gold and Silver Awards for compliance. Controlled and managed clean-up of a substantial illegal discharge of PCBs into the sanitary sewer system with no permit violations.

Promote employee and leadership development- Job shadowing program, Performance appraisal training for all supervisors (8, 4 week, one day session for over 120 supervisors), monthly lunch and learn meetings for technical knowledge sharing, recognition program developed for and by employees (included lunches for years of service and supervisory special recognitions for good work).

Formed "green team" employee team to evaluate and propose internal sustainability measures ­ Held internal "conferences" where we brought in external trainers for technical training to maintain certifications and professional development hours which provided 1600 person­ hours of training last year.

Charlotte Water supports an Operations Challenge Team that has competed nationally for the past few years.

Charlotte Water encourages employees to utilize educational reimbursement to further develop skills and knowledge. Through that program a number of employees have earned degrees ranging from high school GEDs to PhDs.

Maintain stability in financial management by maintaining fund balance ratio of 50% of operating fund budget, debt-ta-PAYGO capital funding mix of 60-40 and debt coverage ratio of at least 2.0 - Met target. Revised the rate setting methodology to enhance revenue stability and sustainability - Documented rate and fee setting methodology into an easy to use guidebook. Completed annual review and refinement of rolling 10 year model that considers customer growth, changes in operations, capital needs, and consumption. Maintain AAA bond rating for all three credit rating services. Gained approval of water/sewer rate increases consistent with long-term financial planning.

Encourage Wellness – 3 Weekly organized employee exercise programs, wellness rooms at various locations with workout equipment, department sponsored teams for various activities such as softball and Water for People SK. Participate in City-wide wellness incentives to improve employee health and control health care costs. All utility owned property is now tobacco free. Encourage employees to utilize City-provided "MyHealth Clinics" for no-cost health coaching/health care/prescription drugs.

Reduce Risk Management Exposure - Developed Community Investment Program that was supported by master planning studies in both water and wastewater. Rehabilitation and upgrade needs are tracked, planned, and implemented with collaboration between operations and engineering staff. A critical assets team identifies and routinely monitors/inspects infrastructure considered "critical" based on vulnerability and consequences of failure. ISO 14001 and 9000 certifications were successful externally audited with zero non­ conformances. Achieved Phase 3 Level of Partnership for Safe Water in the Water Treatment Plants. The ISO program includes a preventative action committee that develops programs centered on the sustainable SMs of Manpower, Machinery, Material, Measurement, and Method. Storm water pollution prevention is one of the key focus areas of the preventative action committee.