

## **THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE CERTIFIED PUBLIC MANAGER PROGRAM OF ILLINOIS: A Parallel Process**

When I began to develop the Certified Public Manager Program of Illinois I was reminded that programs like people are organic in nature. Like all living things a program consists of many dynamic and intersecting parts each informing the other to form a whole program. And, like all living things, the success and effectiveness of a program is dependent upon a complex web of influences and relationships. This led me to recognize the parallels between the professional development of public managers and the development of a CPM program. To some this may be an obvious connection, however to articulate this symbiotic relationship provided me with a conceptual framework that helped to guide me through the labyrinth of developing the Certified Public Manager Program of Illinois.

I would like to share with you some of the parallels I discovered:

### **Orientation**

Parallel to a public manager first introduction to a CPM Program, I began with an orientation to the National Certified Public Manager Consortium. I reviewed the expectations and parameters that govern CPM programs and their development. I found the National Certified Public Manager Consortium Accreditation Standards and Checklist to be a helpful tool, using it to organize an accreditation binder that identifies what structures, processes, and resources need to be in place in order to be a viable and successful CPM program and to obtain program accreditation.

### **Program Plan**

Understanding the scope of a CPM Program, I developed the program plan. Program plans, like professional development plans, helps to identify a program's needs, and areas of strength and challenge. The program plan is a map, identifying all the steps and tasks related to achieving each program objective, articulated over time. It enables a program at any stage of its development to see where it is, where it needs to go, and how to get there.

### **The Role of Mentoring**

Like the American Academy of Certified Public Managers who contributes in a variety of ways to the professional enrichment of a CPM students and graduates, Consortium members play a similar role in the growth and development of emerging CPM programs. The Wisconsin Certified Public Manager Program mentorship of our program in Illinois provides us with constructive critique, essential information, sagacious guidance, and helpful resources.

### **Building Partnerships**

Essential to the success and effectiveness of any public manager professional are the quality of their working relationships within their agency and with their working partners in local and state government. Likewise, the success and effectiveness of a CPM program is based upon the quality of the support the program receives from its sponsoring organization and the level of collaboration obtain from a program's state and local partners. These partnerships are the heart of a viable and successful CPM program.

### **Program Life Long Learning**

If the heart of a CPM program is the support it obtains from its sponsoring organization and the partnerships it forms with local and state government, then the soul of a CPM program are the public manager professionals. Central to the life and health of any CPM program are the CPM students and alumni. They are the synergy, providing the feedback that enables the program to remain relevant, progressive, and responsive to the ever changing demands of the public sector workplace and environment.

Spring 2007 our first CPM class begins, and so begins the life of the Certified Public Manager Program of Illinois. Illinois joins a dynamic group of committed people who, in the words of Peter Senge, "continually expand their capacity to create the results they truly desire, where new and expansive patterns of thinking are nurtured, where collective aspiration is set free, and where people are continually learning to see the whole together", to promote excellence in public service.