



CITY OF SANTA CLARA

A COUNCIL OF TRUST

PRINCIPLES, NORMS, STANDARDS, AND BEST PRACTICES

Approved by City Council August 20, 2002

At the Monday, July 29, 2002, Special Meeting on “Managing Change,” the Council discussed managing change brought about by the implementation of *The Code of Ethics and Values*. The Council’s goal was to draft a set of norms to guide those running for elected office. By the end of the session, the Council had described “running for office and living our values” as looking like:

1. Following These Guiding Principles

- Look at the law and also at “the right thing to do.”
- Hold yourself and each other to the higher standard.
- Honor the common good. Represent community.
- Separate role as Council member from role as candidate. Honor your role as a Council member. Act as a member of the Council Team.
- Assume all are here for service of city.
- Think strategically. Educate.
- Communicate consistently that ethics is upfront in this campaign.

2. Using These Specific Norms and Standards

- Don’t jump to conclusions.
- Avoid finger- pointing.
- Stick to the issues.
- Tell the truth. Don’t mislead.
- Rely on facts and interpret them as fairly as you can.
- Avoid impression of representing city, overstating our contributions.
- Don’t assume you know someone else’s motive. Attribute positive motive of service to community.
- Treat others with respect. Golden Rule (“Treat others as you would want to be treated.” Alternately: “What you do not wish done to yourself, do not do to others.”)
- Respect the process.
- Respect City resources

3. Adopting These Best Practices

- Wait. Get Facts.
- Talk to each other. Go directly to the other person. Discuss.
- Arrive at ground-rules with your opponents beforehand, if at all possible.
- Communicate your ethics clearly ahead of time to your staff and workers.
- Make clear to all Third Parties how you’re running your campaign and what you’ll do if anyone distorts that or attacks an opponent in an unethical manner.
- Appoint and empower a campaign staff conscience to help when time is short and stressed.
- Ask the ethics questions by habit: Use the decision-making tool, and especially ask: How does this decision advance the City’s values in best practice? What ethics reasons make this the right thing to do?
- Use ethics language to explain your decisions.
- Have something written stand “the test of time.”
- Be able to look at yourself in the mirror at the end of the day...and set a high standard for what we want to see.

The Council agreed that these practices would create behavior that they would trust, thus the “Council of Trust”.