

# EXCELLENCE *in Government*

- » OUTSTANDING CUSTOMER SERVICE
- » GREAT PRODUCTIVITY AND EFFICIENCY
- » DOING MORE WITH LESS - REDUCE COST AND ELIMINATE WASTE
- » INNOVATION AND CREATIVITY
- » ENTREPRENEURIAL WITH COMPETITIVE SPIRIT - BE THE FIRST AND THE BEST
- » MOTIVATED AND ENGAGED EMPLOYEES

## The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District's Experience

*Bringing the best private sector business practices into government*

There are government agencies that implement effective business practices seen primarily in the private sector that lead to efficiency, productivity, innovation, and exceptional customer service on an ongoing basis. The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District has long been committed to establishing and maintaining a work culture that values and rewards efficiency, productivity, competition, innovation, and exceptional customer service as the bottom line.

**The purpose of this document is to share our experience, offer our assistance, and in keeping with our desire for continuous improvement, seek your ideas and suggestions on how we can do better.**



## BE THE FIRST AND THE BEST

### » Are the following true for your agency?

- ▶ Happy employees who are fully engaged and vested in the mission and success of the organization
- ▶ Excellent customer service in every interaction
- ▶ Exceptionally high productivity with measurable results
- ▶ Problem solving with innovation and creativity
- ▶ Lower operating cost through efficiency and streamlining

At the San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District, through a systematic approach, we ask these questions on an ongoing basis and have successfully instituted a work culture that achieves the above stated goals.

### » Is your organization achieving its full potential?

### » Are your clients and customers (the public you serve) satisfied with the level of service they receive?

### » Why should we continually reexamine our work cultures?



## ACHIEVING A CULTURE OF EXCELLENCE IN GOVERNMENT

Successful implementation requires that the following beliefs, convictions and commitments be ingrained in the organization's DNA:

- ▶ Unshakable belief at all levels of leadership that employee welfare and well-being is essential to an agency's achievement of excellence
- ▶ Embrace change and have the entrepreneurial and risk-taking spirit to seek change
- ▶ Make delivery of great customer service to internal and external customers the top priority for the organization
- ▶ Always strive to be the best and the first in everything in which the agency endeavors
- ▶ Place a higher value on positive attitude and initiative over technical expertise in hiring and promotional decisions

Once the organization has transformed to a point of complete acceptance of the above beliefs, convictions and commitments; success demands daily follow-through with a myriad of actions to build, strengthen and maintain the culture and monitor results.

- ▶ Work constantly through actions and words to demonstrate to employees that you value their welfare and well-being
- ▶ Communicate expectations clearly and routinely
- ▶ Use employee recognition to reward good behavior and to communicate expectations
- ▶ Build an environment where employees take pride in working for the agency
- ▶ Create a safe environment for employees to offer suggestions for change/improvement
- ▶ Follow through with addressing the employee suggestions in a timely manner
- ▶ Train employees and provide the necessary tools to meet and exceed expectations
- ▶ Hold employees accountable
- ▶ Infuse constant energy to keep it fresh
- ▶ Make it an intrinsic part of each employee's job
- ▶ Create an environment where employees are not put in silos and see themselves working for the agency as a whole – not for an individual department or division
- ▶ Provide freedom and encouragement to constructively critique the work of others
- ▶ Serve as a role model

## ENGAGED EMPLOYEES

Excellence in Government is accomplished through a management philosophy that places a greater focus and emphasis on attitude and positive behavior while setting high expectations and striving for excellence in quality of work and productivity. Achieving and maintaining a work culture like this requires day-to-day attention and ongoing commitment and effort from all levels within the organization.

High productivity, innovation and exceptional customer service are often attributed to private sector businesses where profit motive and attention to the bottom line compel businesses to pursue best management practices.



In contrast, many subscribe to stereotypes that government agencies and public employees are inefficient and wasteful, provide poor customer service, and lack innovation and creativity. While characterizing all government agencies and public

employees as such is unfair, the public would be better served if more public agencies instituted work cultures that deployed effective business practices that are often attributed to elite and well-managed private sector organizations.

# EXCELLENT CUSTOMER SERVICE IN EVERY INTERACTION

We stand ready to share our experience, answer your questions and learn from you

The San Joaquin Valley Air Pollution Control District (District) is a public agency governed by a Board of thirteen local elected officials and two members appointed by the Governor. The District is a public health agency whose mission is to improve the health and quality of life for all Valley residents through regulatory and incentive-based strategies affecting several thousand businesses and entities throughout Central California.



## EMPLOYEE EMPOWERMENT



Based on their experience with the District, elected officials serving on the District Governing Board and stakeholders doing business with the District have asked that we share with other entities throughout the region our work culture, which we call STAR (Service, Teamwork, Attitude, Respect). In response, we have prepared this document as an introduction to our work culture, and we stand ready to provide additional information and assistance.



**San Joaquin Valley**  
AIR POLLUTION CONTROL DISTRICT

### **Northern Region**

*Serving San Joaquin, Stanislaus  
and Merced counties*  
4800 Enterprise Way  
Modesto, CA 95356-8718  
(209) 557-6400 | Fax: (209) 557-6475

### **Central Region (Main Office)**

*Serving Madera, Fresno  
and Kings counties*  
1990 E. Gettysburg Avenue  
Fresno, CA 93726-0244  
(559) 230-6000 | Fax: (559) 230-6061

### **Southern Region**

*Serving Tulare and Valley air basin  
portions of Kern counties*  
34946 Flyover Court  
Bakersfield, CA 93308-9725  
(661) 392-5500 | Fax (661) 392-5585

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