

# MME 2024 Summer Workshop



Michigan  
Municipal  
Executives

Leading Technology Change and Getting Staff on Board

Susan Barkman, Assistant to the City Manager, Royal Oak



# **SUSAN BARKMAN**

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**Royal Oak, Michigan**

**Susan has been the Assistant to the City Manager in Royal Oak for the past three years, covering a wide variety of projects. Prior to that she worked in Aurora, Colorado spending time as a neighborhood liaison, management analyst, and the interim city clerk.**

**She moved west to finish her Bachelors Degree at the University of Colorado Boulder and later completed her MPA through the University of Colorado Denver.**

**In her free time, she loves to visit national parks, and do nature/wildlife photography.**

## Goals for the session...

- Focus on the change management element of technology change
- Challenges of change
- Not to be a commercial for agenda management systems
  
- I will pull from agenda management as examples based on my work to implement new agenda management systems in two different cities.

## Aurora, Colorado



**Population – roughly 378,000**

**Staff – 3,000 – 4,000 FTE**

**Change was driven by staff changes and aging IT infrastructure and implementation occurred between August 2020 and January 2021.**

**Moved from an internally built approval system to an external system.**



# Royal Oak, Michigan



**Population – roughly 58,000**

**Staff – roughly 330 FTE**

**Change was driven by staff who saw a need for increased interdepartmental coordination, and report consistency. Started back in late 2023.**

**Moved from a less formal process, to a formal approval and routing system.**

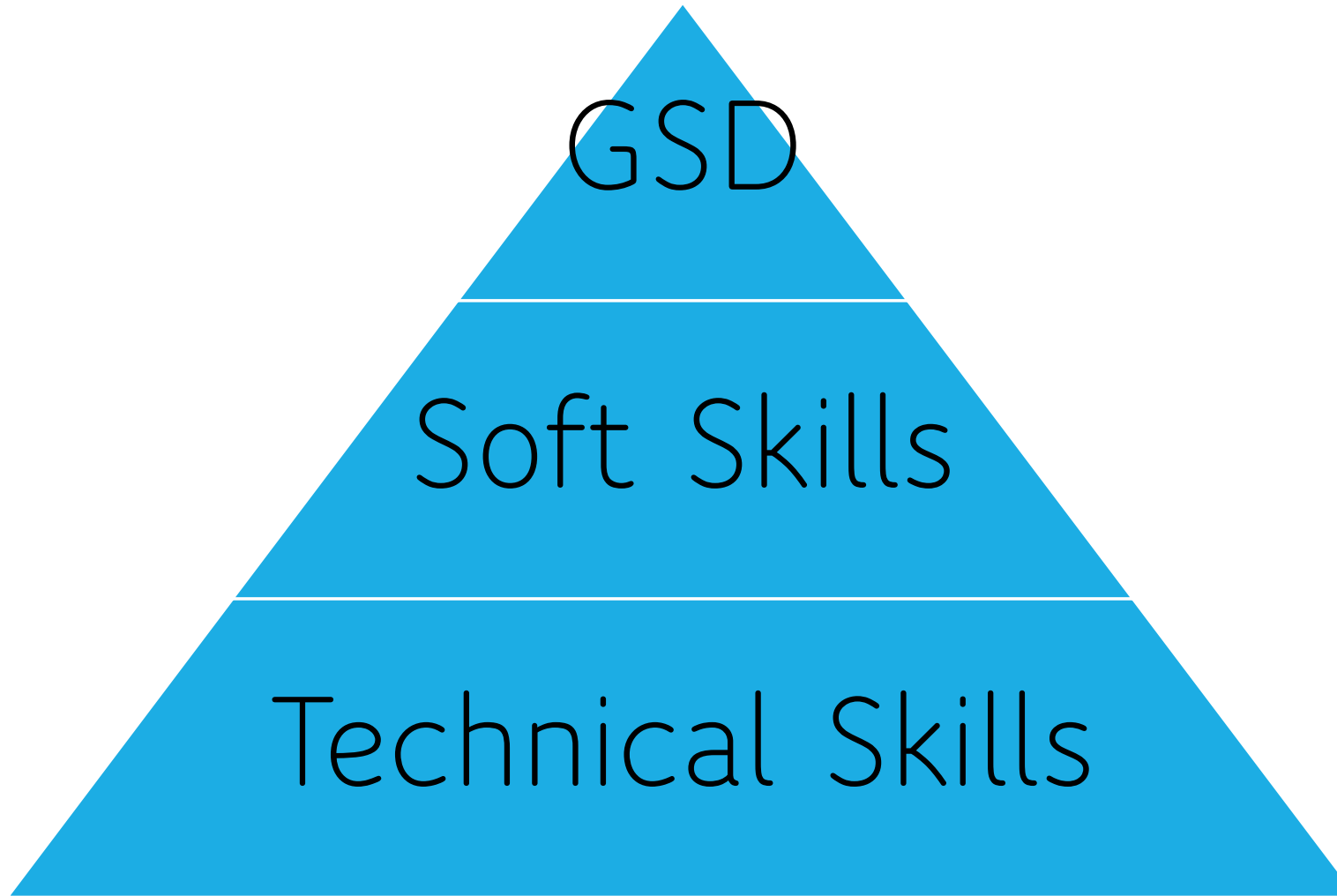
# Change Management



# Identifying the Problem

- Determine that change is required.
- Help people understand the problem.
- Remember that not everyone sees the problem the same way.

## Who to select as Project Lead?





# Developing Criteria

- **Process Improvement**
  - Get out sticky notes, and identify legal requirements, and must haves.
  - We often understand our parts of a process and then rough idea on other people's parts.
  - This also helps you understand the thorns in people's sides.
- **Remember your why.**
- **Don't make selections in a vacuum. Get your stakeholders on a team including the sticks in the mud.**

# Implementing - Organizational Factors

- **Readiness to Change - Encourage resiliency**
- **Interest in Changing – Find ways to appeal to them, use your early adopters and cheerleaders!**
- **Workplace Culture – Build culture, use this as an opportunity**
- **Team Spirit – Recognition, be honest and authentic, find time for resiliency if needed.**

# Implementing - Supporting with Staff Training

**Early Adopters – Who is most excited by change?**

**Middle Adopters – Who will come along with the flow?**

**Late Adopters- Who will you drag across the finish line?**

**Who is tech savvy and who isn't?**

**How can you address training needs for future new hires?**

## **Implementing - M is for Mutiny**

- **Try to understand where they are coming from.**
- **Look for opportunities to help them.**
- **You can't always accommodate everyone's best timing.**
- **Do not let them get away with mutiny.**

# Change and Elected Officials

- Be honest with the challenges, be diplomatic too
- Work to explain the changes they will see
- Keep them focused on why you are changing the process



# Recap

- Not everyone gets to be happy with systemwide changes.
- If they loved it the way it was, they will hate anything that comes next.
- Pick a project lead who can take the heat or step up to it.
- Dive into your organizational readiness.
- No solution is perfect, don't let perfect get in the way of progress.

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