

How to Advance Your Career in Government Fleet Management

A practical career-development roadmap for technicians, leads, supervisors, analysts, and managers

MEMA NorCal Webinar

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Two fleet leaders, two paths through public service

MEET YOUR PRESENTERS



CITY PERSPECTIVE

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**Fleet & Solid Waste Program
Manager**

Public Works Department
City of San Ramon



COUNTY PERSPECTIVE

David Worthington

Fleet Manager

County of Santa Clara
Facilities & Fleet Management
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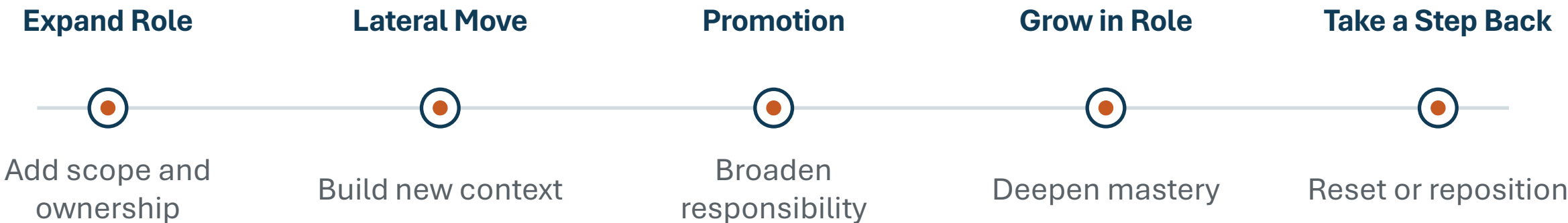


Self Reflection and Aspirations

Career growth is a **lattice**—not a ladder

Progress can move in more than one direction—and still be progress.

FIVE VALID WAYS TO GROW — NO PRESCRIBED SEQUENCE



Growth is measured by capability, contribution, and choice—not title alone.

The next step may be sideways

A lateral move can become the bridge to a future promotion.



Change duties

Ask for project exposure where you are



Change division

Fleet, facilities, public works, utilities, admin



Change agency

Broader scope, larger fleet, different resources



Change level

Lateral now may create upward mobility later

Tradeoffs to evaluate: commute • compensation • pension • culture • resources • politics • family bandwidth

Career growth starts with honest self-reflection

SELF-REFLECTION

**What do you bring—
and what must grow?**

STRENGTHS TO LEVERAGE

What do others rely on you for?
Which results and relationships
set you apart?

AREAS TO DEVELOP

What skill, habit, or experience
is holding you back from the
next role?

**Choose one strength to use
more deliberately—and one
gap to address next.**

CAREER-READINESS CHECK

Are you willing to...

MOBILITY & ROLE CHOICES

- ☐ Change employers
- ☐ Move for the right opportunity
- ☐ Make a lateral move

LEARNING & CREDENTIALS

- ☐ Dedicate time after work to beneficial educational opportunities
- ☐ Earn fleet, supervisory, and management educational certifications
- ☐ Read trade publications to understand current and future industry challenges
- ☐ Learn the local, regional, state, and federal regulations affecting fleet operations

PEOPLE & EXPOSURE

- ☐ Be mentored
- ☐ Receive career advice
- ☐ Join a fleet association
- ☐ Tour other fleet organizations' facilities

COMMUNICATION & COMPETITION

- ☐ Learn to speak in front of small and large groups of people
- ☐ Practice job-interviewing skills

**Commitment: circle three actions you will
take in the next 90 days.**



Growth and Development

Experience should do most of the teaching

Use the 70–20–10 model to balance stretch work, relationships, and formal learning.



70%

EXPERIENCE

LEARN BY DOING

- ☐ Lead a preventive-maintenance improvement
- ☐ Own a cross-department project or acting assignment

20%

PEOPLE

LEARN THROUGH OTHERS

- ☐ Ask a mentor to review your career plan
- ☐ Join a fleet peer group, tour, or committee

10%

FORMAL LEARNING

BUILD FOUNDATIONAL KNOWLEDGE

- ☐ Complete supervisory or fleet certification
- ☐ Take targeted training in budgeting, safety, or data

Grow beyond the job description

Promotions require proof that you can handle broader responsibilities.



- 
Operations
 Scheduling, PM compliance, shop workflow
- 
Business
 Budgets, contracts, purchasing, rate impacts
- 
People
 Coaching, conflict, labor relations, safety culture
- 
Technology
 Fleet systems, data quality, dashboards, EV tools
- 
Communication
 Memos, presentations, council/board-ready summaries

Technical competence gets you noticed. Broader competence prepares you to lead.

Use job descriptions as a roadmap

Don't wait for the opening to learn what the opening requires.

JOB DESCRIPTION

- Budget & procurement
- Fleet replacement planning
- Maintenance operations
- Safety & regulations
- Customer service
- Technology & data
- Supervision & labor



PERSONAL GAP ANALYSIS

- I have this** Document examples and results
- I need exposure** Ask for a stretch assignment
- I need training** Find class, cert, or mentor
- I need proof** Lead a project and quantify impact

Practical exercise: compare 3–5 real postings from different agencies.

Associations multiply exposure

Learn faster through peers, tours, training, and service.



Action: attend, ask questions, volunteer, and follow up with one new connection.



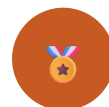
Learn from other agencies

See how peers solve the same problems with different constraints.



Volunteer visibly

Committees, tours, panels, and webinars develop confidence.



Build transferable credibility

People begin to know your work beyond your current employer.



Stay current

Technology, regulations, procurement, and workforce issues change fast.

Mentors : An untapped resource



Inside mentor

Knows your agency, culture, and internal opportunities



Outside mentor

Sees the broader market and offers more neutral advice



Peer network

People growing with you who share tools and lessons



Sponsor

Someone who can speak to your ability when you are not in the room



“Networking is not asking for a job. It is building relationships before you need them.”

Training matters when it closes a real skill gap



Fleet certifications

NAFA / MEMA / sector-specific learning



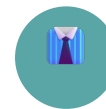
Technical training

ASE, OEM, diagnostics, EV safety



Public-sector skills

Procurement, HR, finance, risk, labor



Management training

Coaching, performance, conflict, communication



Industry awareness

Regulations, technology, sustainability, data

Ask: “What knowledge will make me more capable in the position I want?”



Applying and Interviewing

Prepare before the opening

Strong applicants already have the evidence ready.

-  **Accomplishment log**
Projects, numbers, outcomes, recognition
-  **Resume / profile**
Keep baseline material current in NEOGOV-style systems
-  **Reference readiness**
Make sure references know your work and goals
-  **Research file**
Agency budget, fleet size, challenges, goals
-  **Example bank**
Conflict, leadership, project, safety, customer service

CAREER BINDER

Certifications

Licenses

Awards

Letters

Project summaries

Metrics / results

Evidence beats memory.

Tell interviewers your story

Make your experience specific, clear, and visible.



Application

Answer the question directly. Spell out your experience. Avoid acronyms.



Interview

Use specific examples. Explain your role, decision, and result.



Mindset

Do not be humble. Do not be arrogant. Be clear, prepared, and positive.



Follow-up

Send thanks, ask for status appropriately, seek feedback if not selected.



**Interview formula: Situation → Your role → Action → Result
→ Lesson**

Use STAR to make every answer easy to score

Keep the context short, spend most of your time on your actions, and close with evidence.

S

SITUATION

Set the scene in 1–2 sentences. Name the fleet context, constraint, and stakes.

T

TASK

State what you owned. Be explicit about the goal, your responsibility, and the deadline.

A

ACTION

Explain your decisions step by step. Say “I,” show judgment, and make this the longest part.

R

RESULT

Quantify the outcome. Add what you learned, sustained, or would improve next time.

EXAMPLE

“Tell us about a time you improved vehicle availability with limited resources.”

S Technician vacancies and parts delays were pushing preventive maintenance past due.

T I was responsible for stabilizing the schedule while keeping priority units available.

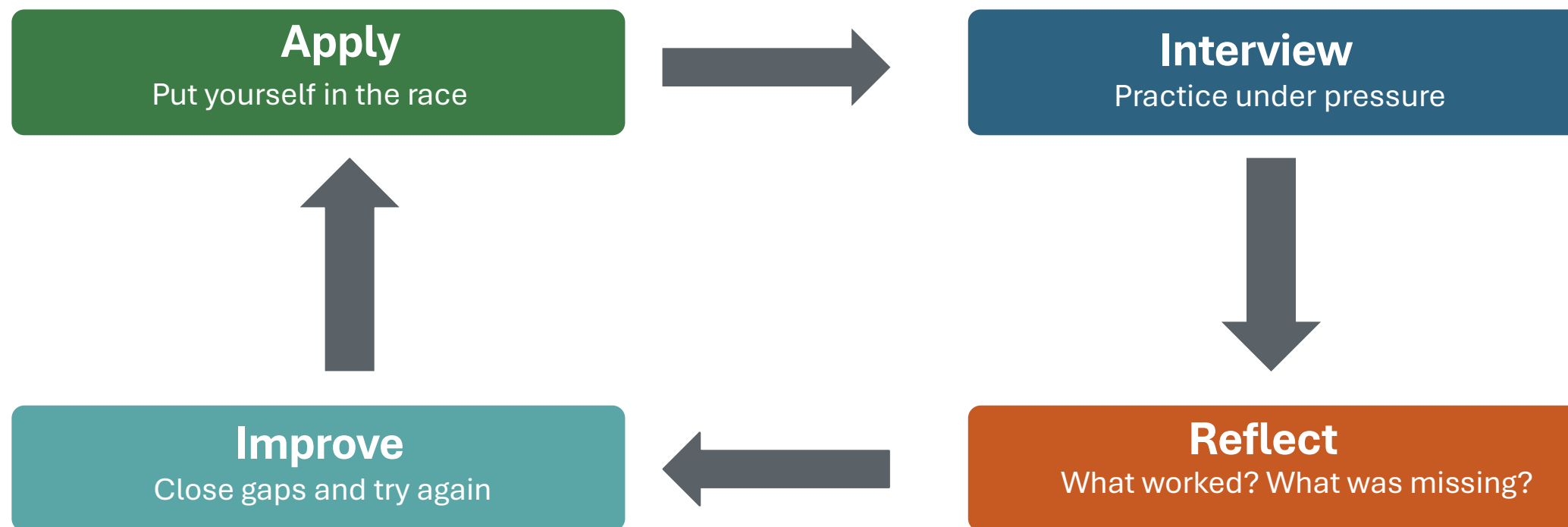
A I ranked units by operational risk, created a daily parts escalation, shifted bays to quick-turn work, and briefed customer departments twice weekly.

R On-time PM rose from 78% to 93% in eight weeks, and the backlog returned to target.

Use your real scope, actions, and metrics—never memorize the sample.

No is not the end of the story

The people who advance are often the people who keep improving after disappointment.



Sometimes the unsuccessful interview is what prepares you to win the next one.

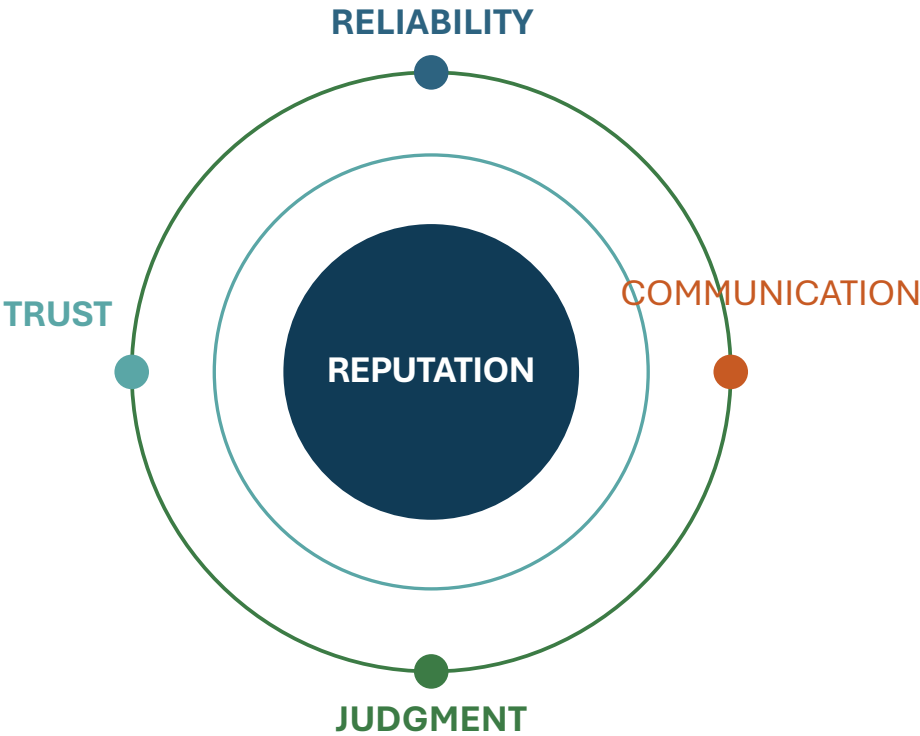


Next Steps

Your reputation is built before the posting opens

Eight everyday behaviors signal readiness for larger responsibility.

1 OWNERSHIP	Own problems Bring options, not just complaints	Follow through Finish what you start and close the loop.
2 PEOPLE	Develop others Help newer employees succeed	Represent the team Customers and vendors see the whole organization through you
3 JUDGMENT	Stay calm People remember patterns more than single moments.	Model professionalism Respect is visible before and after interviews.
4 GROWTH + VOICE	Be teachable Feedback is a tool, not an insult.	Communicate up Share risks early and professionally



Readiness becomes visible long before the interview.

Next Steps - 30 / 90 / 365-day plan

30 days

Pick your next target role.
Download 3–5 postings.
Identify your top three gaps.

90 days

Find a mentor. Attend one
fleet event. Volunteer for one
stretch assignment.

365 days

Lead a project. Update your
resume. Practice
interviewing. Reassess
readiness.

Don't wait for the opportunity to prepare for the opportunity.

Questions & Discussion

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