



# Building Leaders from Within: Design a Powerhouse Training Program

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MARCH 19, 2025

LAURA PHILPOT, CITY MANAGER, CITY OF MAPLE VALLEY

JULIE UNDERWOOD, DEPUTY CITY MANAGER, CITY OF KIRKLAND

# Community Profiles



## City of Maple Valley:

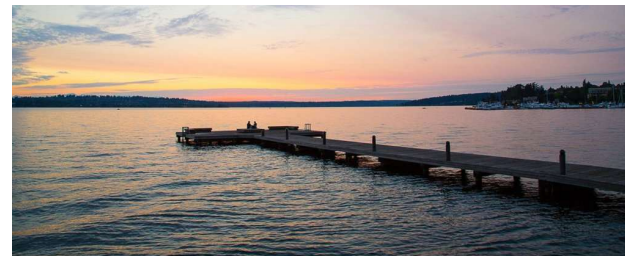
- 29,250 population
- 5.8 square miles
- 62 full time employees
- Up to 100 seasonal employees
- Contract City - fire, police, utilities
- Council-Manager Form of Government



Laura Philpot  
City Manager

## City of Kirkland:

- 96,920 population
- 18.25 square miles
- 6<sup>th</sup> largest municipality in King County
- 12<sup>th</sup> largest in state
- Full service - fire, police, utilities
- ~850 employees
- Council-Manager Form of Government



Julie Underwood  
DCM of Operations

# Objectives

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- Overview of Training Initiatives:
  - Kirkland – Mid-large size jurisdiction
  - Maple Valley – Small size jurisdiction
- Highlight missing skills gap
- Discuss how to get started

# Let's Get to Know Each Other

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What skills sets are missing in your organization?



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# Missing Skills and Vote for Favorite

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## Top 10 Skills – Over Next 5 Years

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1. Creative thinking
2. Analytical thinking
3. Technological literacy
4. Curiosity and lifelong learning
5. Resilience, flexibility, and agility
6. Systems thinking
7. A.I. and big data
8. Motivation and self-awareness
9. Talent management
10. Service orientation and customer service
11. BONUS 11<sup>th</sup> skill: Leadership and social influence

Source: SHRM

# Kirkland's Leadership Training

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- **Women's Leadership Summit** – A full day during Women's History Month; open to all women 3<sup>rd</sup> year; outside speakers; leadership panel; theme
- **Leadership Bootcamp (LBC)** – A cohort of ~30 participants; open across the City; internal and external speakers/trainers; 6 sessions with a group project and graduation; 2<sup>nd</sup> cohort graduates in April
- **Leadership Symposium** – A full day; open to all; outside speakers; leadership panel







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Thank you to everyone who was involved in  
putting on the Women's Leadership Summit!  
Such a successful and engaging day – Bravo!

-HAYLEY HAGEN



# 2023 WLS Evaluation

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The Women's Leadership Summit was informative and engaging.

100%

Strongly agree or agree

I plan to attend future Kirkland career events.

100%

Strongly agree or agree

The length of time for the event was good.

95%

Strongly agree or agree





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# Kirkland's Leadership Bootcamp

**Cohort 1 – 2023-2024**



# LBC Goals & Objectives

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## **Goal**

*The Bootcamp will prepare, strengthen, and support current and future leaders, with the goal of developing well qualified, diverse, enthusiastic, and dedicated leaders throughout the City of Kirkland.*

## **Objectives**

*The Bootcamp strives to provide a supportive network of fellow leaders and peers, and deliver a comprehensive leadership development program with objectives that builds skills and capabilities to be successful within a complex and changing environment:*

### **1. Self-Awareness**

2. Increase your impact by building self-awareness including knowing one's strengths, blind spots and/or derailers.
3. Develop a personal mission and values statement and an individual professional development plan.
4. Explore how cultural background and experiences influence your leadership and management style.

### **2. Relationships and Teambuilding**

1. Learn skills to build trust and lead with integrity, empathy, authenticity, courage, and confidence.
2. Develop techniques that create psychological safety to inspire and encourage team cohesion and resiliency.
3. Learn how to delegate, provide feedback and coaching, and create a framework for lessons learned.
4. Develop tactics for "managing up" and partnering with one's immediate manager and other leaders.
5. Learn negotiation skills that move beyond positional bargaining to build strong, thoughtful relationships with partners



# LBC Goals & Objectives

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## **3. Communications**

1. Learn how to become a more effective listener.
2. Develop skills for establishing and fostering strong lines of communication.
3. Build communication skills for leading a multi-generational, diverse, and hybrid workforce.
4. Develop effective public speaking and presentation skills.
5. Master techniques for managing difficult and critical conversations.

## **4. Organizational Culture**

1. Foster a common understanding of what it means to be a leader in the City of Kirkland.
2. Explore ways to elevate equity, activate diversity, and lead inclusively.
3. Practice participatory and facilitation skills that enhance organizational change, process improvements, and creative problem-solving.
4. Learn how to identify, shape, and maintain a positive and healthy organizational culture and courageously address challenges to the culture.



Kirkland Leads Presents

## 2024 Leadership Symposium

**COMMUNICATE  
COLLABORATE  
ACT &  
ADAPT**

OCT. 29, 2024 // 8AM - 5PM LAKE WASHINGTON INSTITUTE OF TECHNOLOGY, 11605 132ND AVE NE, KIRKLAND, WA

REGISTRATION | MEET & MINGLE 8:00-8:30 am

WELCOME  
**MAYOR KELLI CURTIS** 8:30-9:00 am

SMALL GROUP ACTIVITY 9:00-9:30 am

EMPOWERING LEADERSHIP IN ACTION:  
MASTERING NEGOTIATION & RESILIENCE  
**KWAME CHRISTIAN** 9:30-10:30 am

BREAK 10:30-10:45 am

RAISING THE BAR:  
CREATING A CULTURE WHERE EVERYONE THRIVES  
**KYLE CRONK** 10:45 am-12:00 pm

LUNCH | NETWORK 12:00-1:00 pm

HELP THEM THRIVE:  
BOOST EMPLOYEE ENGAGEMENT, RETENTION, & WELL-BEING  
**MELISSA MAJORS** 1:00-3:00 pm

BREAK 3:00-3:15 pm

LEADERSHIP STORIES THAT INSPIRE US TO COURAGEOUSLY LEAD 3:15-4:30 pm

CALL TO ACTION & CLOSING REMARKS  
**CITY MANAGER KURT TRIPLETT** 4:30-5:00 pm

# Kirkland's Leadership Symposium



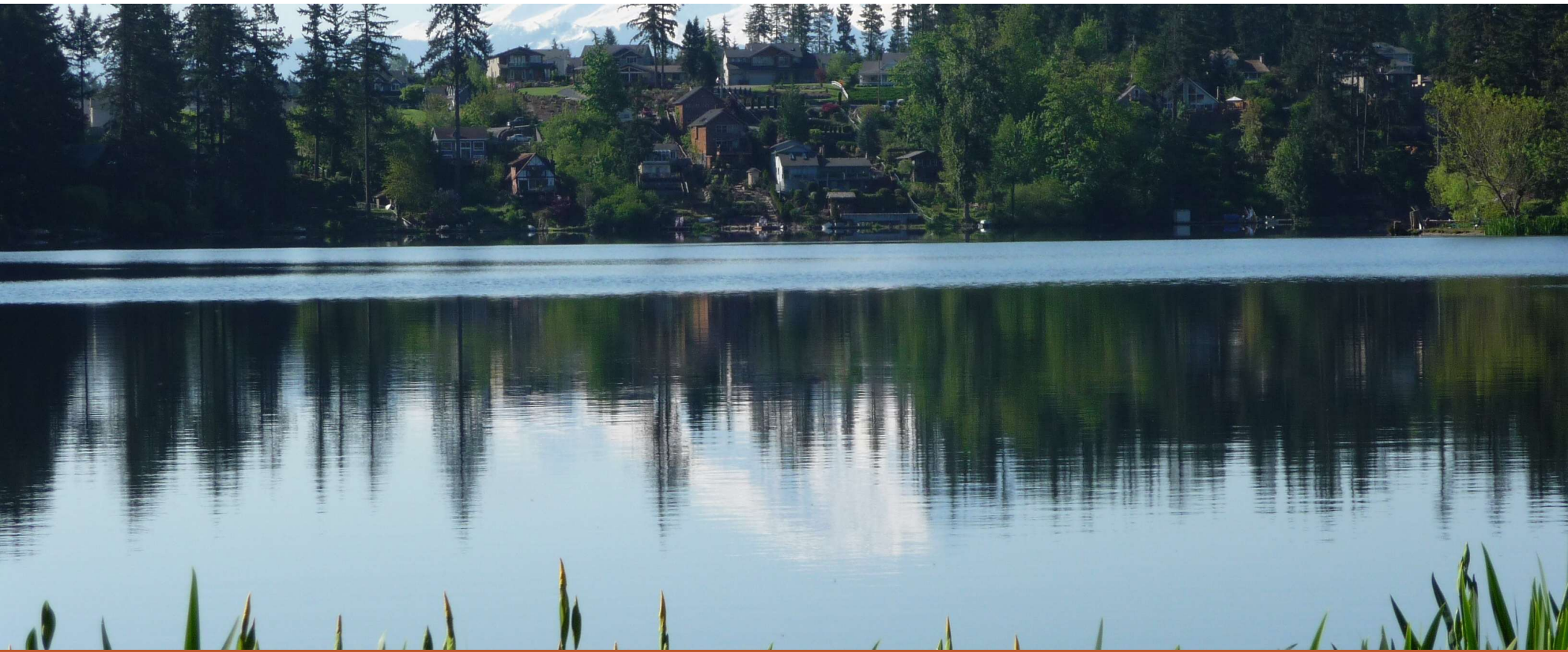
Kyle Cronk



Ramiro A. Chavez, Heidi Behrends Cerniwey,  
Bristol Ellington, Jennifer Ferrer-Sant Ines



Melissa Majors, Kurt Triplett



# How does your organization support its leaders?

Mentee poll or small group discussion?



# Maple Valley's Emerging Leaders

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- **Women's Leadership Summit** – A full day during Women's History Month; open to all women. Partnered with neighboring cities. Even Years.
- **Extended Leadership Team** – Bringing managers and leaders together from all departments to create a shared understanding of Maple Valley's culture.
- **Leadership Summit** – A half day leadership training opportunity for extended leadership team. Odd Years.
- **Committee Leadership Roles** – Opportunities for staff to take on more leadership roles with "special duty pay".



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The facilitators were great, and the  
subject matter was spot on.

-2024 ATTENDEE







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# Women's Leadership Summit 2024

Was this summit beneficial  
to your professional and  
personal growth?

96%  
Yes

Would you be interested in  
attending another WLS in the  
future?

94%  
Yes

**AGENDA**  
Women's Leadership Summit  
March 27, 2024  
Lake Wilderness Lodge  
Maple Valley, WA

7:30am – 8:30am	Check-in/Light Breakfast (provided)
8:30am – 9:00am	Welcome & Introductions
9:00am – 12:00noon	Women that Do... SUZY BENSON, Certified Dare to Lead™ Facilitator  We are thrilled to be led through an introspective morning by Suzy Benson. Topics will include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <b>WOMEN THAT DO</b> Vulnerability</li><li>• <b>WOMEN THAT MANAGE</b> Shame/Inner Critic/Imposter Syndrome</li><li>• <b>WOMEN THAT PRACTICE</b> Empathy/Self-Compassion</li></ul> Suzy is an inspiring coach, speaker, and facilitator who leads with passion, energy, and vision. Her mission is to help people become better leaders, find fulfillment in their work and live happier, healthier lives. After founding and then directing a non-profit - African Promise Foundation - for 10 years, she transferred her experience and skills to the corporate environment. Suzy personally trained with Dr. Brené Brown and is a certified facilitator for her Dare to Lead™ program. In addition, Suzy leads people on personal development journeys to Uganda, Africa. Suzy raised her 5 children in Maple Valley, and is crazy about her new grandson, Kingston. <a href="http://suzybenensoncoaching.com">suzybenensoncoaching.com</a> 
12:00noon – 1:00pm	Includes 15 min BREAK LUNCH (provided)

# Women's Leadership Summit 2024

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- Partnership between Black Diamond, Covington, and Maple Valley. Small cities don't need to go alone!
- Agreement to do this every other year.



# Extended Leadership Team

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- Doesn't cost anything
- All managers from all departments
- Use this group to create the desired culture
- Share leadership tips and training
- Create safe space for feedback

# Committee Leadership Roles

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- Employee Committee Leadership roles for staff.
- Special Duty Pay.
- Rotating opportunities.
- Examples:
  - Wellness Committee;
  - Employee Relations Committee;
  - REACH Committee; and
  - Safety Committee.

# Adopt a Culture of Continuous Learning

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- 53% of HR Managers say their workforce faces a skills gap (SHRM)
- 74% of employees want to develop new skills to remain employable (PWC)
- 76% of employees say they are more likely to stay with a company that offers continuous training (SHRM)
- 65% of employees say they would stay throughout their career if the employer reskilled them (SHRM)



# Tips for Getting Started

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1. Determine what you need – is it leadership training (which aids in succession planning), mentoring, skill building, etc. ?
2. Organizational leaders must lead, support, and champion the effort.
3. Create a pilot – signal that this may not continue or may need to change.
4. Don't reinvent the wheel – start with what has worked in other places.
5. Establish a team to “do” the work.
6. Get feedback from evaluations, focus groups, etc. – then adjust and pivot.
  - Suggestion boxes.
  - Open Office Hours.
7. Look for partnerships (e.g., neighboring cities).