



NACO Institute of Excellence

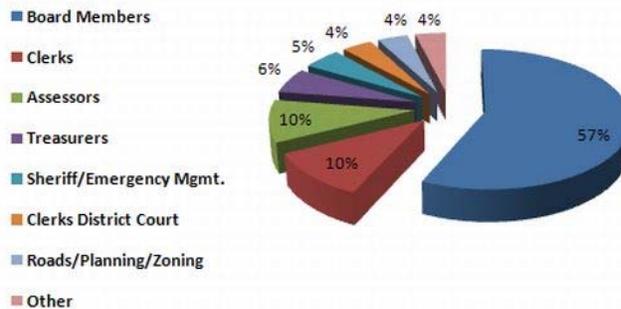
Report of Accomplishments January 2012



The **NACO Institute of Excellence** is a year-long professional development program for county officials. It focuses on **leadership and communications training**. Partnering with the Nebraska Association of County Officials, faculty from UNL Extension, Agricultural Leadership, Education and Communication and the UNO School of Public Administration teach the program.

Since 2008, 162 county officials have completed the institute earning **Certificates of Achievement** and recognition from peers. Piloted the first two years with county board members, the program was **opened to all elected and appointed officials** in 2010.

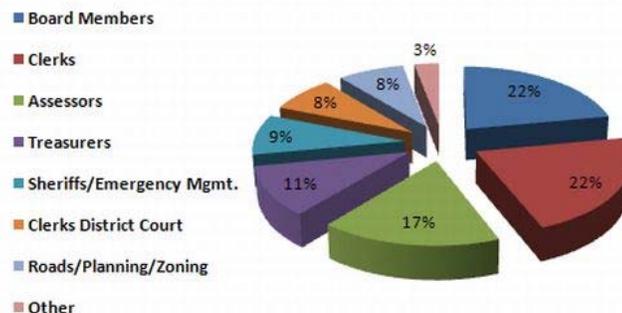
Breakdown of Participants 2008-2011



Over the last 3 years results from post then pre-tests indicate statistically significant change in knowledge for almost all leadership concepts and skills measured (n=33).

Funding for the Institutes of Excellence is generated by user fees. Program expenses average \$9500 annually.

Breakdown of Participants 2010-2011



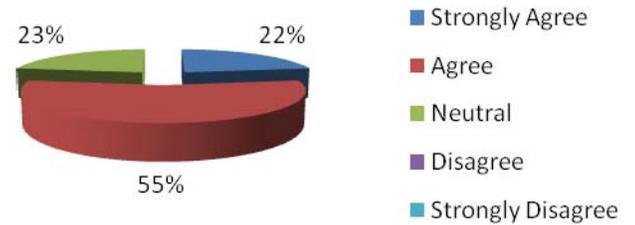


Report of Accomplishments continued...

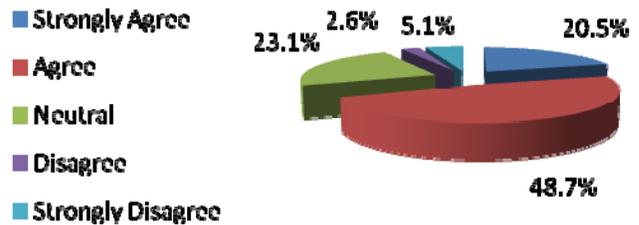
When asked to briefly explain a behavior or practice changed as a result, in part, of the institute, most indicated they are better listeners and seek out or consider other opinions before making decisions. Comments include:

- “I try to repeat what a constituent has said to be sure we are on the same page. That has helped me tremendously as many times we are in agreement, just voicing our opinions differently.”
- “I listen and talk with my young staff (I’m 50+ and they are 25) differently than before with better success. Positive results!”
- “I now separate the person from the problem and focus on interests rather than positions.”

In 2011 evaluations indicated 77% of participants either strongly agreed or agreed they are better leaders in venues outside of county government.



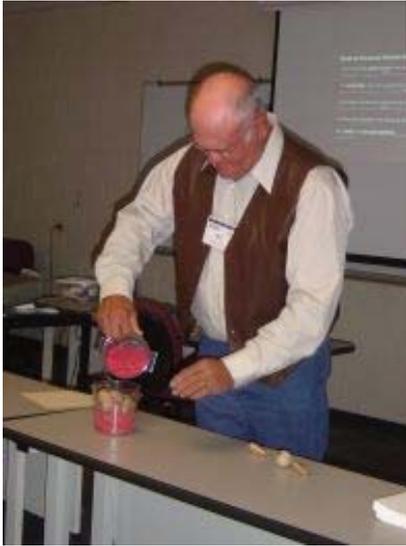
69% either strongly agreed or agreed they try to think “out of the box” or be more entrepreneurial.



Advanced NACO Institutes of Excellence... To further develop their competencies, 18 graduates participated in two additional, more in-depth, institutes to gain a deeper understanding of personality differences and conflict management.

Yet to come...

In 2012 a *study* will be conducted to determine *impact* on counties in general, as a result, in part from the NACO Institutes of Excellence.



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Extension is a Division of the Institute of Agriculture and Natural Resources at the University of Nebraska–Lincoln cooperating with the Counties and the United States Department of Agriculture.

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