Finding New Ways to Do the Same Work With Fewer People

Kelly Telford, CPA, Partner, LSL CPAs
Patricia Song, CPA, Finance Director, City of Garden Grove

Polling Question

What is your Finance Department's current staffing levels?

- Fully staffed (all positions are filled)
- Only a small amount of turnover (infrequent vacancies)
- Vacancies in a few positions
- 25% or more vacancies

Current Challenges

- Fewer experienced candidates are available to fill management positions
- Fewer college students are choosing accounting as a career
- Fewer students are choosing government as an industry

THESE ISSUES AREN'T TEMPORARY!!!!

Quoted studies

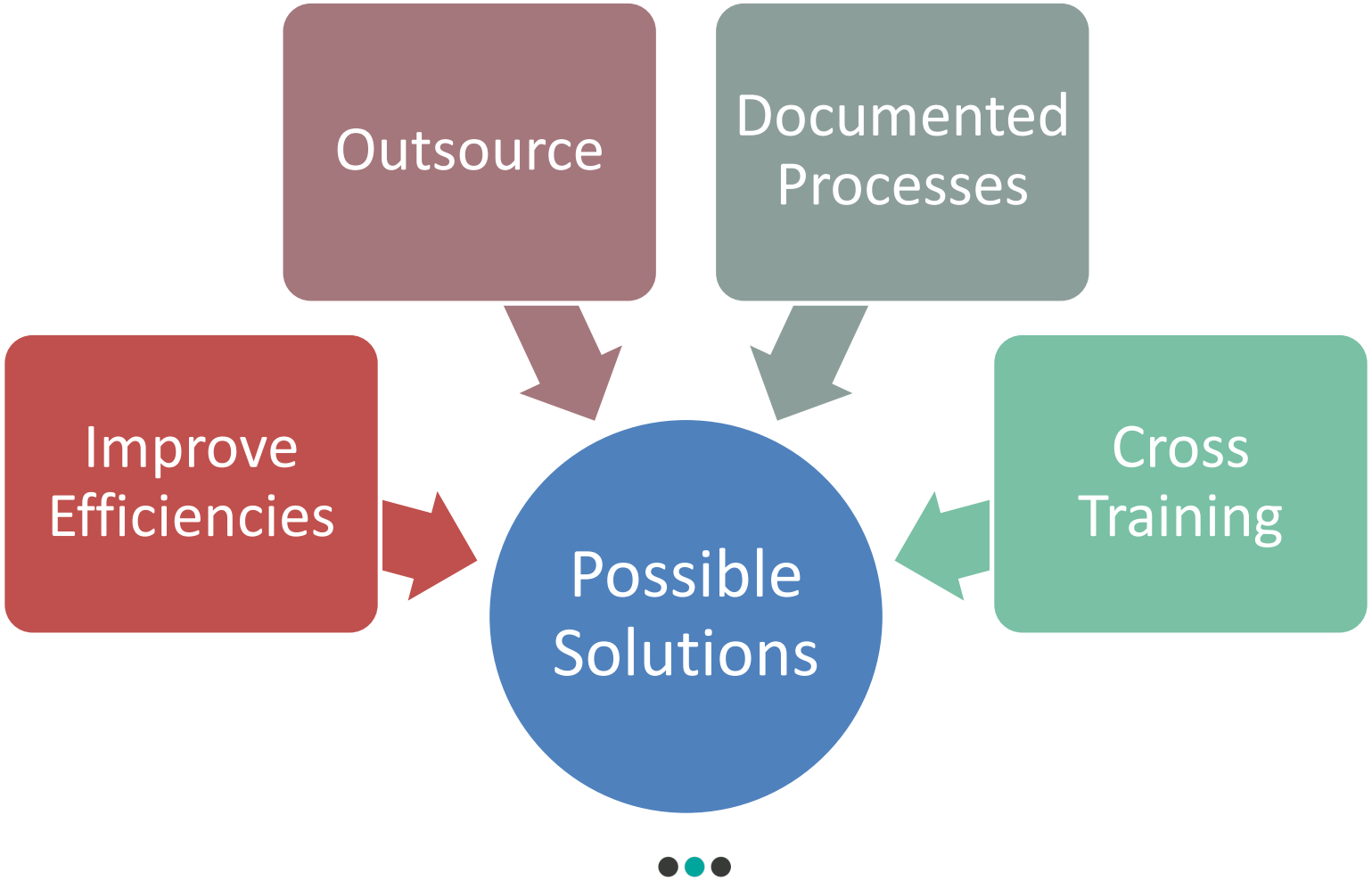
GALLUP INTERNATIONAL founded 1947

The CPA Journal The Voice of the Profession

AICPA

How do keep up on day to day given these staffing issues?

Change How We Do Things



Improve Efficiencies

- Look for opportunities to automate or minimize repetitive and labor-intensive processes
- Assign the right people to the task
- Upgrade software
  - Enhance customer experience and allow more to be done online (rather than people coming into City Hall)
  - Implement paperless environments where documentation is always at your fingertips
  - Avoid the temptation to prepare reports outside of your system… **let the software do the heavy lifting!**

Outsourcing

- Look for 3rd parties to do things that may not be labor intensive but are repetitive in nature
- Look for key repetitive functions that take a lot of time that you can outsource
- Hire consultants to do the complex functions that you don't have staff with expertise in… **let consultants do the heavy lifting!**

Polling Question

Does your organization have documented processes or procedure manuals (accounts payable, payroll, cash receipts, utility billing, bank reconciliation, etc.)?

- Yes, our procedures are well documented and updated regularly.
- Some key processes are documented but not all processes.
- No, and we don't have the time to do it!

Documenting Processes

- Understand the roles and responsibilities of each position
- Create a workflow document that shows the main steps in the process
- Build out procedures manuals that document how we do it
- Look for opportunities to improve HOW we do things

Documenting Processes

PAYROLL

Daily:

- Plans, organizes, coordinates and supervises the activities for payroll
- Provides support, information, assistance to HR and IT for all payroll changes as a result of implementing MOU's, PERS rates changes and others
- Provides support and assistance to city employees in regards to payroll, MOU explanation, retirement planning, 4850, time card entries and other on as needed basis and resolves complaints in timely manner
- Provides assistance on electronic time sheet

Bi-weekly:

- Runs bi-weekly payroll in compliance with federal and state tax law, and City MOU 's for each group accurately and timely
- Finishes payroll timely and accurately to allow for timely direct deposit transmission
- Audit HR folder for new hires, termination, demotion, promotion, pay increases
- Process retro, garnishments
- Reports biweekly retirement earrings to CalPERS and PARS including retro and other adjustment reporting timely within established deadlines
- Requests payments for garnishments, federal and state taxes, RH PD ICMA payments, deferred plan including 457 and 401A

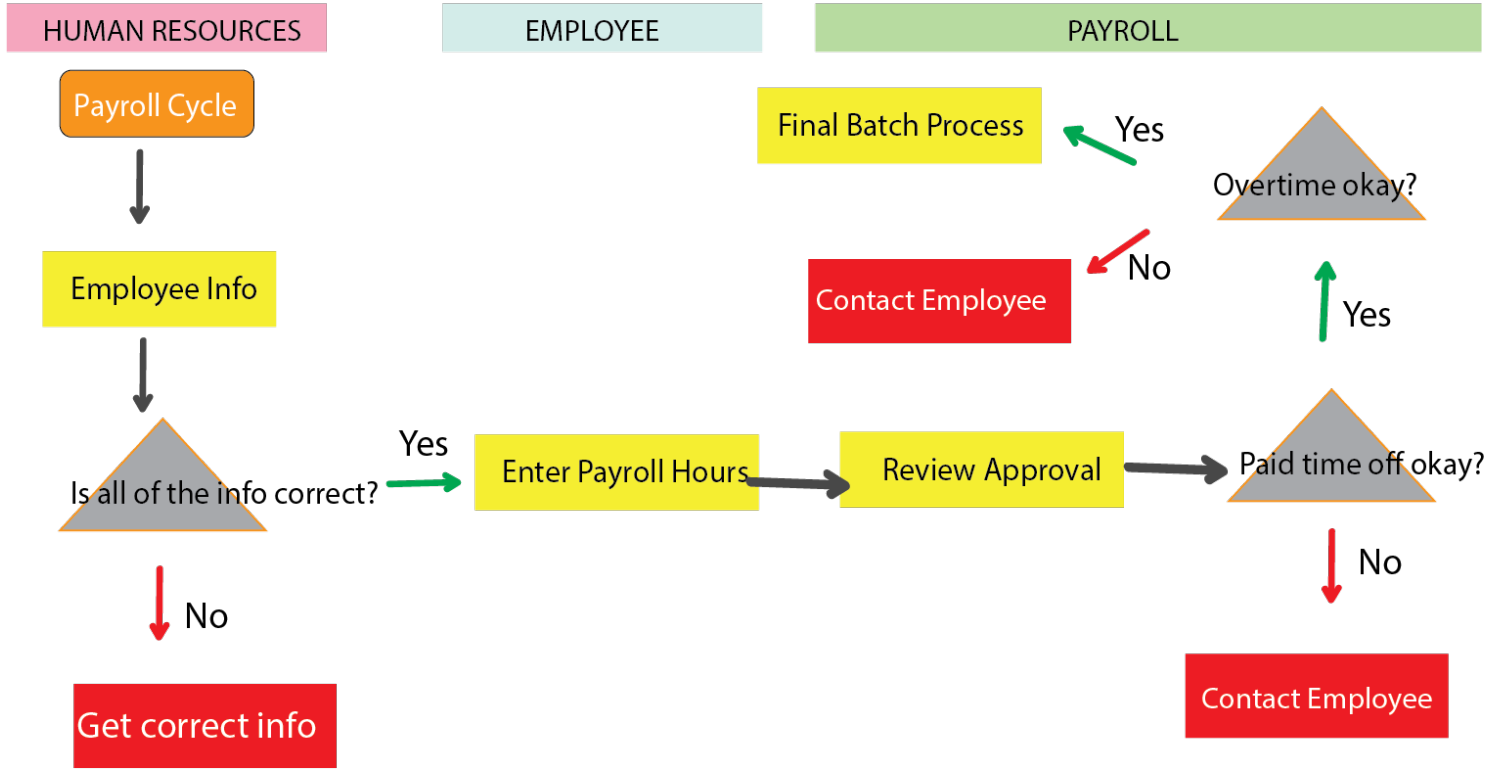
Monthly/Quarterly/Yearly

- Prepares monthly, quarterly and yearly reporting for Federal taxes and EDD
- Prepares yearly Census data
- Responsible for budget labor distribution, clarification of all positions in the system
- 4850 reconciliation
- Prepares / assists in yearly W-2 preparation
- Attends yearly Government Tax seminar
- Qtry SRO billing and salary increase projections

As needed:

- Responds to CalPERS payroll inquiries, discrepancies, audit responses
- Participates in development and implementation of all payroll changes (in the past system upgrades, ets implementation)
- Meets with HR, IT staff and City Attorney on as needed basis for FLSA compliance
- Provides payroll training
- Responsible for PeopleSoft updates due to MOU implementations, changes and ensures compliance of all applicable laws, regulations, MOU's, policies and procedures
- Audits all final changes from IT and HR especially for reporting purposes
- Makes modifications to payroll, especially for payroll reporting employees on 9/80 schedule

Documenting Processes



Documenting Processes

Coconino Community College

Procedure 207-01 Payroll

Sponsor: Business and Administrative Services

Purpose

The purpose of the Payroll Procedure is to establish criteria for the proper control and handling of payments to employees.

Definitions

None

Procedure

Budget Manager Responsibilities

1. Properly authorize and approve appropriate personnel action forms (PAFs).
2. Ensure that supervisors within their department are familiar with, and adhere to, policies and procedures.
3. Establish methods of timesheet submittal for employees who work in remote locations and who do not have access to regular time reporting systems.

Supervisor Responsibilities

1. Be familiar with the basic provisions of the Fair Labor Standards Act (FLSA) covering hours worked, meal periods, overtime pay, travel pay, weekends, and other record keeping.
2. Ensure that employees are trained in reporting hours worked and leave time through the appropriate method.
3. Ensure employees adhere to the procedures as they relate to time recording and time worked.
4. Certify employee's reported time worked, leave time, and overtime for accuracy.
5. Ensure certified time reports are submitted to payroll by required deadlines.
6. Set and enforce employee's work schedule based on operational needs and personnel policies, procedures, and procedural guidelines.
7. In coordination with Human Resources, communicate matters of significance to employees.

Employee Responsibilities

1. Comply with policies and procedures as well as department rules with respect to time, attendance, and reporting.

Polling Question

Does your organization have staff that are cross trained in your major transaction areas (AP, cashiering, payroll)?

- Yes, we have fully trained backups that can step in if someone is on vacation or there is a vacancy.
- Some processes have backups but the backup can only do the basic functions. They can't handle the unusual items.
- No, we don't have backups and have issues any time there are vacancies.

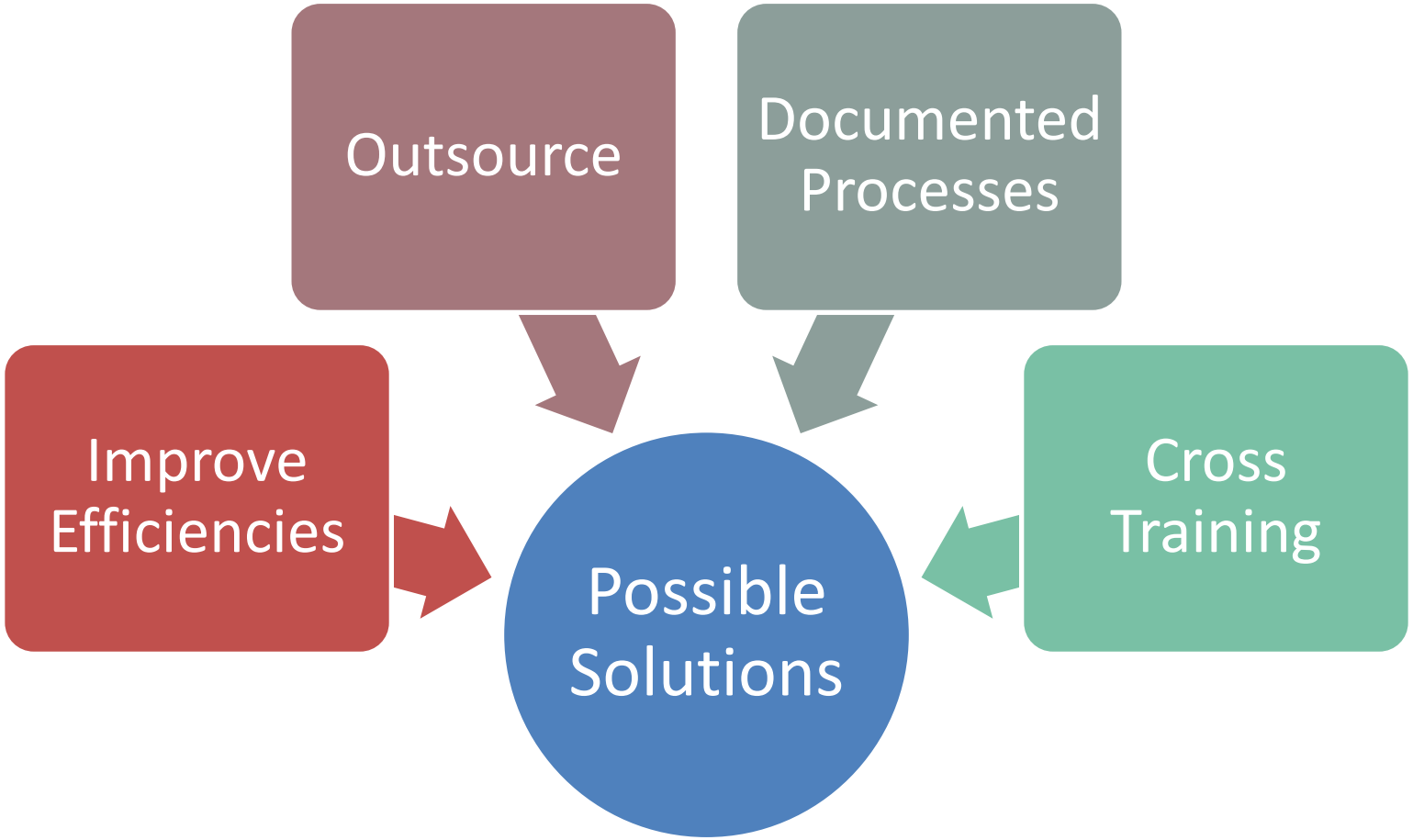
Cross Training

- Provides opportunity to test your documented process to ensure they are still accurate.
- Protects the organization from loss of institutional knowledge.
- Ensures key functions are protected and your vendors and your people will always be paid.

The Garden Grove Case Study

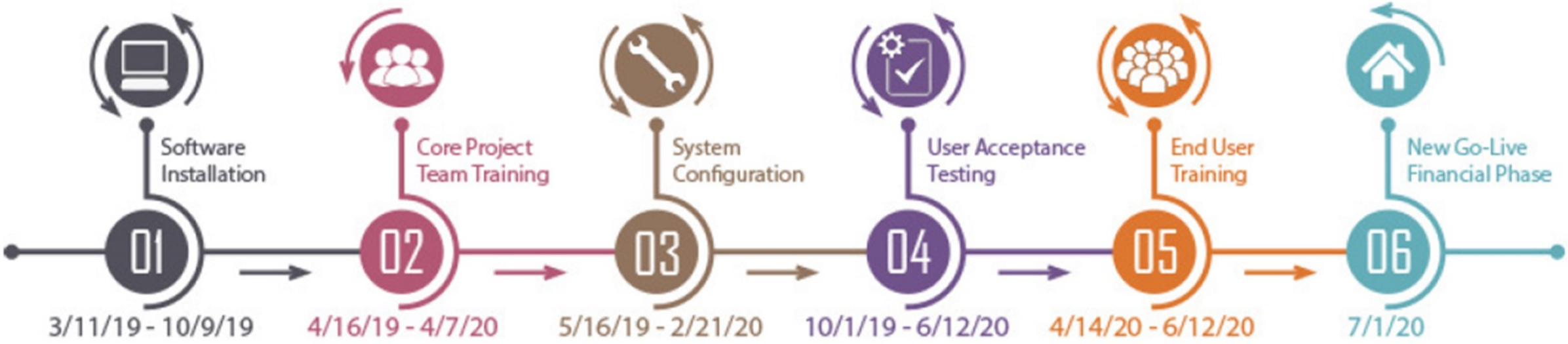
Patricia Song, CPA
Finance Director
City of Garden Grove

Change How We Do Things



Investing in Technology

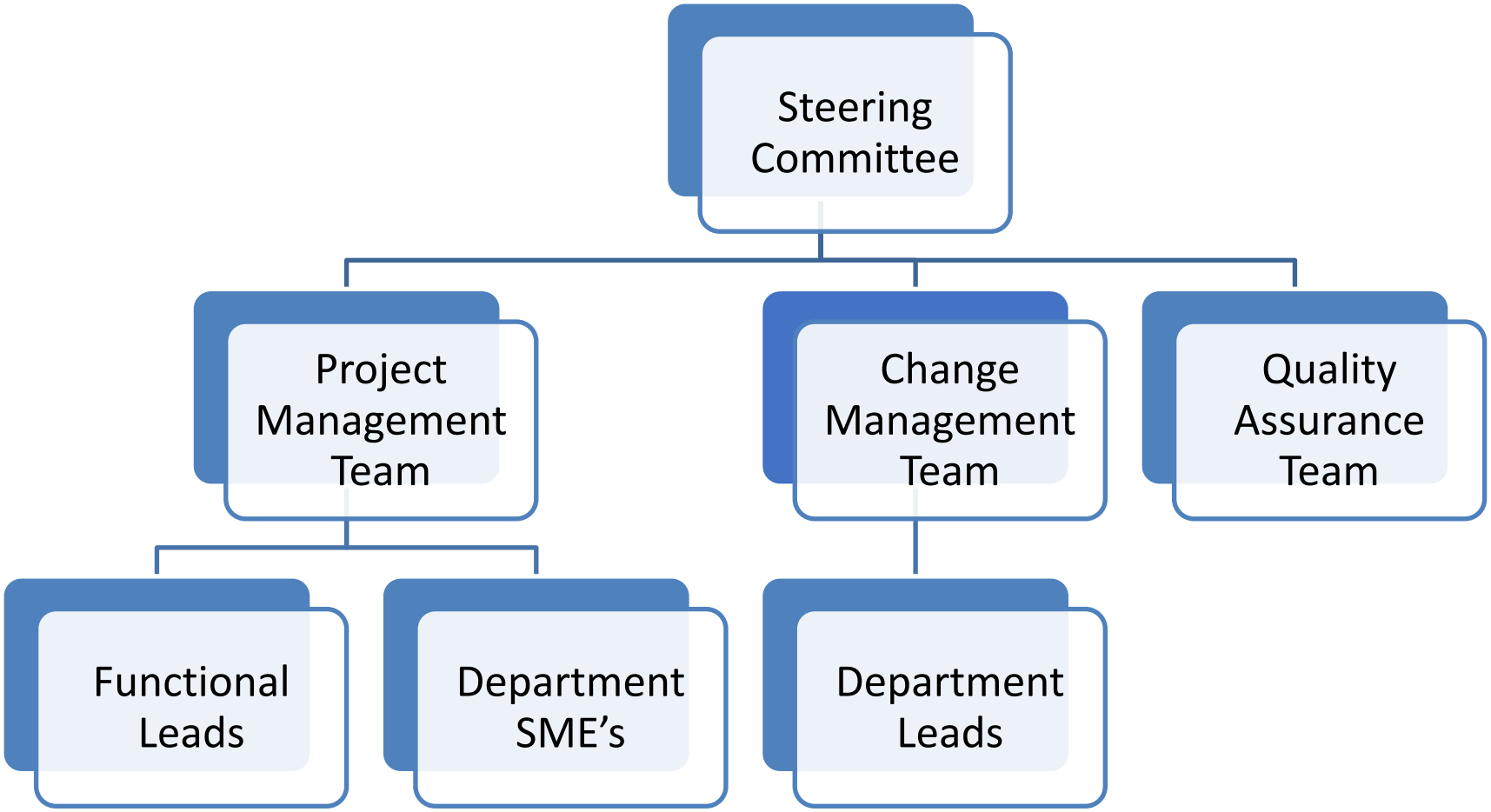
- $6 million investment
- 3-year implementation – from RFP to Go-live
- 2 phases



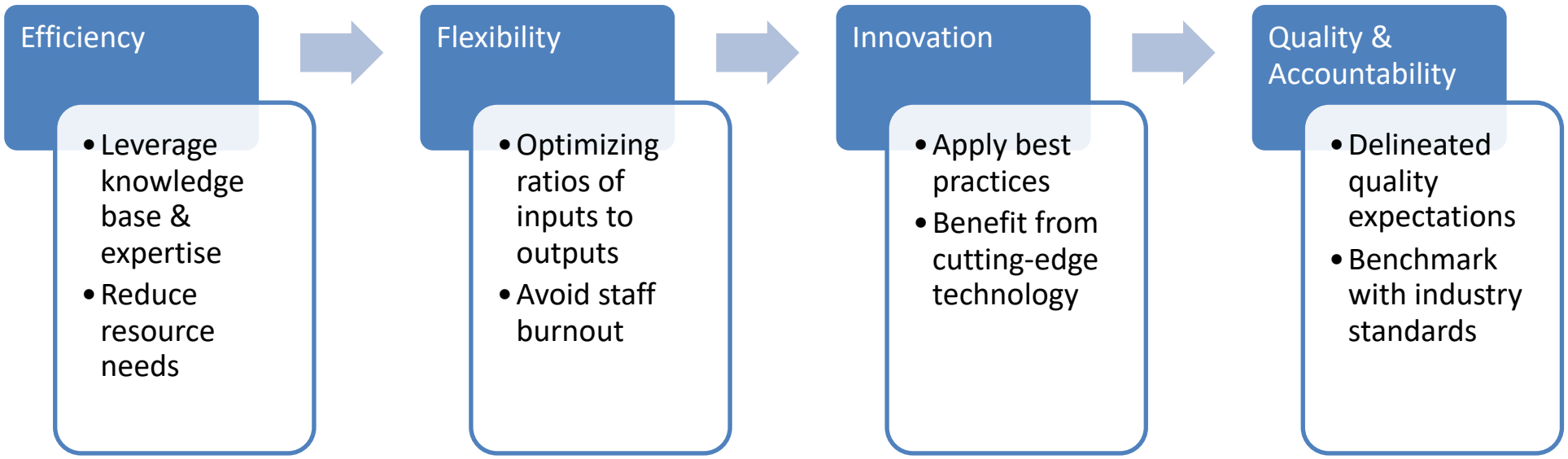
GG Experience in ERP Implementation

- Dedicated Project Manager
- Change Management
- Manage Expectation
- Distinctive yet Well-Coordinated Governance Structure

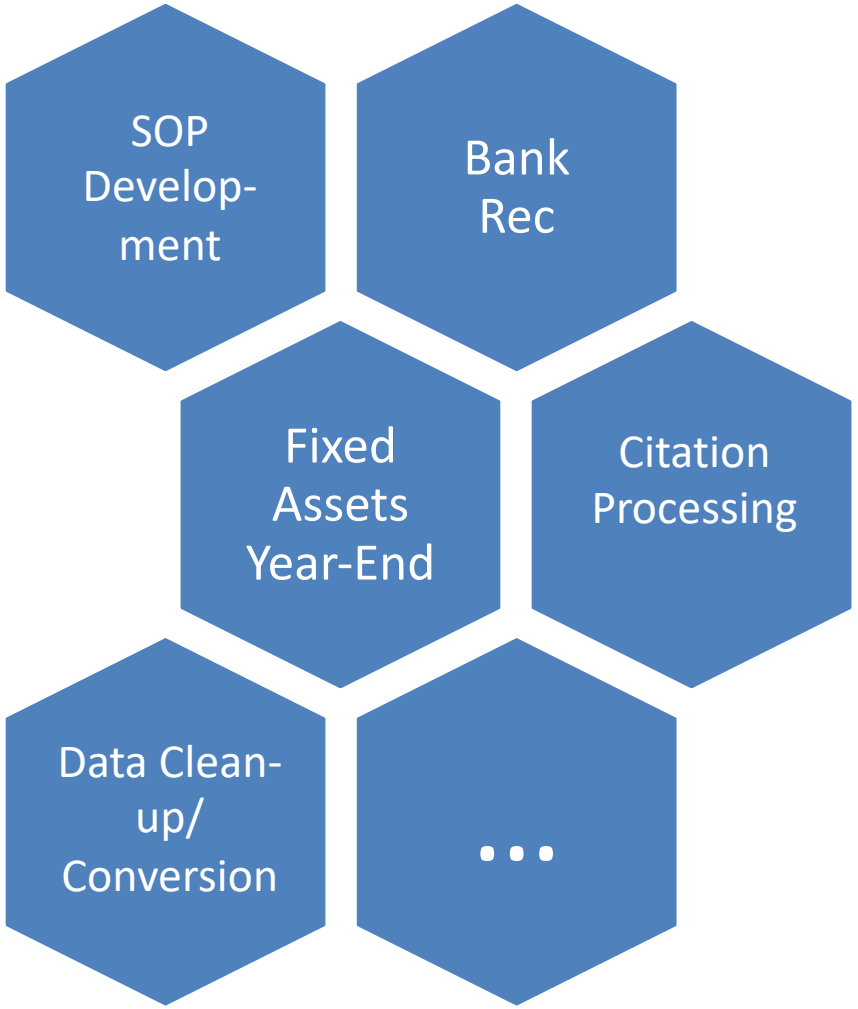
GG ERP City Team



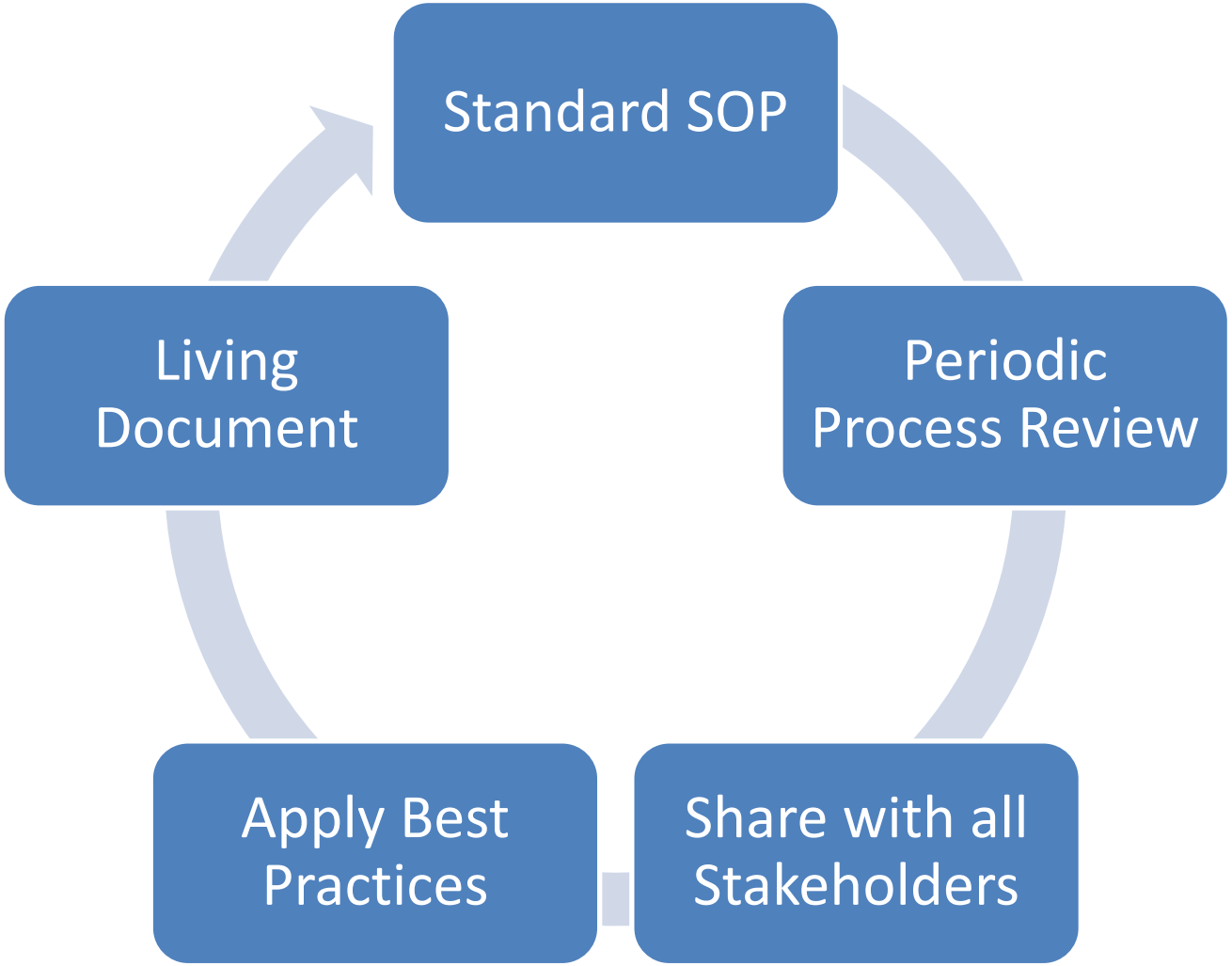
Outsourcing



GG Example in Outsourcing



Process Documentation



Cross Training

- Based on good Documentation
- Ensures business continuity
- Promotes staff development opportunities
- Enhances morale
- Improves internal control

Questions?

Thank you!

psong@ggcity.org
kelly.telford@lslcpas.com