

## The Athena Group – Larisa Benson

### PHILOSOPHY STATEMENT

I specialize in Lean process improvement and Crucial Conversations, helping teams build capacity, competence and confidence. My work is data driven, but starts with a fundamental respect for the people who do the work. Without a culture of free flowing communication based on mutual respect, Lean or any other performance improvement effort will fail to create a sustainable culture of excellence. I offer a complimentary set of hard skills in measuring performance improvement with soft skills to create a healthy workplace culture. I am motivated by helping people rediscover their natural curiosity and experience the joy and satisfaction of delivering real value for the people they serve.



### AREAS OF EXPERTISE/RESULTS

- Crucial Conversations
- Creating a high performing team
- Leadership development
- Lean process improvement
- Strategy deployment
- Performance measurement

### EXPERIENCE / SELECTED PROJECTS

- Expertise in helping leaders and managers navigate complex challenges in the public sector, using effective team building, leadership strategy, and performance data analysis to improve results.
- Experienced and effective coaching for high-level executives as well as managers and front-line workers in unionized environments.
- Results from recent Lean process improvements include 50% or better measurable improvements in permit turn-around times, child abuse investigations, audits, accounts payable and receivable, hiring and onboarding, and procurement of major IT projects.
- Senior Lecturer and former Director of UW Executive MPA. Popular courses in executive education include Foundations of Strategic Management, Leading a High Performance Organization, Performance Measurement and Lean Service Delivery, and Certification in Lean Six-Sigma.

### CREDENTIALS

- Certified Black Belt Lean Six-Sigma
- Certified trainer for Crucial Conversations and Crucial Accountability
- Certified in Five Behaviors of a Cohesive Team
- Certified in Work of Leaders (Everything DiSC) assessments and coaching methods
- Master of Public Administration, University of Washington
- Bachelor of Arts, Government, Harvard University

### SELECTED CLIENTS

- City of Redmond
- City of Tukwila
- Oregon State Legislature
- Pierce County Public Works & Utilities
- King County Metro
- Seattle School District
- Sound Transit
- Pierce Transit

Contact the Alliance at 206-616-8461 OR [alliance@u.washington.edu](mailto:alliance@u.washington.edu).