

# RITA M. PEREA

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## PROFILE

Successful leader and entrepreneur with proven track record as turn-around expert in public and private sectors. Exceptional ability to see the big picture, analyze the situation, engage others, and utilize a continuous improvement model to produce results. Accomplished in public speaking, instructional design and delivery to individual and teams across industries (health care, non-profit, software, publishing, financial services, insurance, education, government).

Reputation for:

- Uncommon ability to bring together diverse groups of people and get them actively engaged in creating solutions.
- Visionary leadership with ability to turn complex initiatives into successful outcomes.
- Inspiring presenter across diverse audiences.
- Data-driven, strategic, analytical approach and fast pace to build results.

## PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

### **RITA PEREA LEADERSHIP CONSULTING, DES MOINES, IA**

**2002-present**

#### **Owner/Principal Consultant**

Leadership and organizational consulting firm specializing in analysis, organizational change, strategic planning, change management, and organizational improvement with executives, leaders, directors, managers and teams in businesses and non-profit organizations.

- Business Model: Utilize a data-driven approach to all aspects of coaching, consulting, training, facilitating groups, speaking, and instructional design practice.

#### **Practice Highlights:**

- Successfully designed training and coaching program based on IT solutions for new and established sales agents in Fortune 500 Property and Casualty Insurance company
  - Collaborated with key leaders to align goals, measureable deliverables and training methods
  - Client comments: "Rita's instructional design solutions were pure genius! Thanks to her our division not only achieved, but exceeded, the measurable results we were looking for."
- Designed and led complex culture turnaround for growing health care client (300 employees in 10 Iowa locations) dealing with financial impact of employee and leadership issues.
  - Identified key drivers, improved leadership competence and staff retention, motivation, and performance.
  - Client comments: "Rita's dedication to our organization is simply amazing.....I was so impressed with our team results."
- Led successful turnaround of international software company marketing team at risk of losing Fortune 100 clients due to complex internal issues (leadership, communication, morale, performance, teamwork).
  - Client comments: "Rita provides a customized toolkit of techniques that work in today's complex business climate. Professionals like Rita are essential to wins."
- Accomplished public speaker—keynote addresses and training presentations include leadership development, organizational improvement, communication, motivation and the multigenerational workplace.

**MONTICELLO COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, MONTICELLO, IA** **2001-2002**  
K-12 district with 170 staff, Board of Directors, 1100 students, \$12 million budget.

**Superintendent of Schools**

- Successfully led turnaround of budget from 4 years of deficits to operating in the black in only 10 months while absorbing 4.7% state budget cut.
  - Assessed district's effectiveness and opportunities with state auditors and consultants, and involved district staff, students, Board and community.
  - Established and led business community task force analysis and implementation of 74 fiduciary recommendations.
- Successfully managed complex budget in union environment
- Collaboratively led executive cabinet of 12 members
- Secured \$383,000 grant in only 2 months—led grant team and utilized continuous improvement model and district data.

**NISHNA VALLEY COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT, HASTINGS, IA** **2000-2001**  
Consolidated K-12 district with 65 staff, Board of Directors, 300 students, \$2.8 million budget.

**Superintendent of Schools**

- Earned state "Exemplary" rating for first state legislated School Improvement Plan.
  - Designed and implemented School Improvement Plan in only 8 weeks. Established and led diverse, high profile advisory group, complex analysis, planning and execution.
- Identified and reconciled complex \$3 million accounting errors of prior 10 years.
  - Successfully represented district at state hearing—avoided \$2.5 million repayment penalty.
  - Working closely with Board, led damage control communication across 4 communities.
- Successfully managed community relationships

**HEARTLAND AREA EDUCATION AGENCY, JOHNSTON, IA** **1998-2000**  
Consultant to 50 school districts in 11 counties (including Polk)—20,000 students, 1,000 staff.

**Consultant—Integrated Curriculum and Instructional Strategies**

**Consultant—School Improvement**

Federally funded program to improve K-12 student achievement using data, research and best practices for inclusive school improvement—involved all district programs.

- Selected for premier assignment as School Improvement Consultant.
- Designed and implemented model to meet complex new mandated state and federal school improvement legislation.
  - Developed comprehensive training program and software—piloted in Iowa districts.
  - Quickly recognized as state expert—produced positive results with 250+ districts.
- Successfully developed comprehensive electronic school improvement planning system—enabled school administrators to meet state requirements and improve district planning and goal setting.
- Recognized for volume and quality of course development and instruction.

**WINTERSET AND MARTENSDALE-ST. MARY'S COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICTS (IA)** **1997-1998**

Two separate K-12 districts with own Boards of Directors, superintendents, staff and programs.

**Director of Curriculum, Cabinet-level position**

Developed educational programs based on district improvement needs.

- Selected as Interim High School Principal of Martensdale.
- Established and led improvement teams, and secured multiple grants to advance programming.

**WINFIELD—MT. UNION COMMUNITY SCHOOL DISTRICT (IA)** **1995-1997**  
Consolidated K-12 district with 85 staff, 500 students, \$4.2 million budget.  
**Elementary Principal and Director of Technology/Curriculum (K-12)**

K-6 school with 245 students, 52 staff.

- In only 6 months and without school money, established first computer lab (50 Macintosh computers) and training program—improved student preparation, access, and achievement.

#### **ADDITIONAL ADMINISTRATION & PROGRAMMING**

**1985-2005**

- Adjunct Professor, collaboration between Drake University School of Education and Heartland Area Education Agency 1991-2005  
Developed and instructed graduate courses for educators
- Adjunct Professor, Viterbo University, West Des Moines 1997-1999  
Developed and instructed graduate courses for educators
- Adjunct Professor, William Penn University, West Des Moines 1998-2006  
Instructed contemporary business leadership models and personal leadership courses
- Teacher, Ankeny (IA) Community School District 1993-1995
- Director/Coordinator—Programs for Gifted Students
  - Ankeny (IA) Community School District 1990-1993
  - Fort Madison (IA) Community School District 1989-1990
  - Chippewa Schools, Doylestown, OH 1985-1989

### **EDUCATION & PROFESSIONAL QUALIFICATIONS**

Graduate School of Education program, Harvard University, Cambridge, MA

Ed.S., Specialist in Leadership, Drake University, Des Moines, IA (2000)

M.A., Kent State University, Kent OH

B.S., Kent State University, Kent, OH—graduated Magna Cum Laude

### **PROFESSIONAL AFFILIATIONS & RECOGNITION**

#### **ORGANIZATIONS**

- Rotary International:
  - Rotary Club of Des Moines, Board of Directors
  - Charter President and founder, Rotary Club of Greater Des Moines (for Emerging Leaders)
  - District 6000 past District Governor Nominee Designee
  - District 6000 Club Extension Committee Co-Chair
  - Zone 28 Public Image Coordination Team member, 2011-2014
- Greater Des Moines Partnership and West Des Moines Chamber of Commerce, member
- Curriculum Sponsor, West Des Moines Leadership Academy
- Des Moines Public Library Foundation Board member, 2014- 2016
- Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, Foundation Board member, 2013-2015
- The Des Moines Embassy Club Board Member, 2014 to present
- Polk County Certified Master Gardener
- Sunset Garden Club, Public Relations Chair
- Alianza, Latino Chamber of Commerce, Board member
- Iowa Assn. of Business and Industry—Leadership Iowa Board of Governors, Executive Committee
- Leadership Iowa, class of 1998 (sponsored by Iowa Assn. for Business and Industry)
- Children and Families of Iowa, Board of Directors
- Broadlawns Hospital Foundation, Board member
- Fort Des Moines Museum, Board of Directors
- Central Iowa Society for Human Resource Management, VP of Membership, Executive Committee
- American Society of Training and Development, Des Moines Chapter, Board member
- 20/30 Philanthropic Society of Des Moines, Business Advisor
- National Speaker's Association, member

## **APPOINTMENTS**

- National Congressional Committee on Small Business Advisory Council
- Des Moines Board of Education—Superintendent Search Advisory Committee
- Governor’s Disaster Relief Task Force
- State of Iowa Engineering and Land Surveying Examination Board; Appointed by Governor Terry Branstad and confirmed by the Iowa Senate.

## **HONORS**

- Most Influential Teacher, University of Iowa (1993 and 1994)
- Iowa Educational Leader Award, 1999 nominee
- Female Entrepreneur of the Year, 2007 nominee
- Community Champion Award, Greater Des Moines Partnership, 2007 nominee

## **PRESENTATIONS AND PUBLICATIONS**

- Recognized as accomplished keynote speaker and expert on leadership, change management, development of staff and management, business processes, and performance measures.
- Known for expertise in multigenerational communication; peak personal performance; and school improvement. Audience sizes range to 1000, with groups from business, education, and non-profit sectors.
- Publications include newspaper columns, website articles, and papers on above topics.
- Business Record Power Breakfast Panel Member, Multigenerational Workplace
- Contributing author of **Awakening in the Workplace**, 2008
- Author of **From Frantic to Fabulous: Beating Burnout Before it Beats You**, 2014

## **PHILANTHROPIC ACTIVITIES**

- Rotary International Foundation, Level III Paul Harris Fellow
- Rotary International Foundation, Paul Harris Society Member
- Rotary International Foundation, Bequest Society
- Greater Des Moines Botanical Garden, Foundation Board member
- Des Moines Public Library Foundation Board member
- Broadlawns Hospital Foundation Board member
- 20/30 Society of Des Moines, Foundation member
- Perea and Perea Leadership Development Scholarship Award
- Business Horizons student scholarship

Founder, Community Chest of Greater Des Moines, granting micro-loans for single parents and working families.

Founder, International Contemplative Garden Association, encouraging mind, body and spiritual mindfulness in the garden.