



# Organizational Success Discussion GUIDELINES

## PURPOSE

These guidelines focus on enabling the Chief Administrative officer (CAO) and Council to regularly review organizational and governance effectiveness. This assessment process is guided by positive success indicators. This eliminates the tendency to avoid focus on past events. Success indicators, effectiveness factors, questions and procedures to guide organizational discussions are based on four core functions of a local government.

1. **Strategic Direction** – the overall roadmap that guides organizational activities
2. **Policy Choices** – decisions that allocate resources and organizational effort
3. **Service Delivery** – provision of programs and services to the public
4. **System Coordination** – requirements for organizational effectiveness and efficiency

## CORE GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS

### POLITICAL

<b>STRATEGIC</b>	<p><b>Strategic DIRECTION</b>          Vision for Future          Organizational Mission          Shared Values          Long Term Goals          Specific Objectives</p> <p><b>The PUBLIC</b></p>	<p><b>Policy CHOICES</b>          Legislative Compliance          Budget Allocations          Policy Decisions          Contract Commitments          Short Term Priorities</p>	<b>POLICY</b>
<b>MANAGERIAL</b>	<p><b>Systems COORDINATION</b>          Personnel Practices          Information Systems          Financial Accountability          Resource Deployment</p>	<p><b>Service DELIVERY</b>          Action Plans          Production Systems          Resource Schedules          Delivery Strategies</p> <p><b>The CLIENT</b></p>	<b>TECHNICAL</b>

### ADMINISTRATIVE

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# 1

## SUCCESS INDICATORS

Key success indicators are intended to describe the ideal state of:

- **Governance** – political aspects that involve elected officials
- **The Organization** – the administrative realm involving management and staff

Success indicators provide a framework to identify 'what is working well'. This type of positive discussion encourages celebration of effort and results. It is also a reminder of the strengths and assets that the organization should reinforce and retain.

Success indicators also help to identify 'areas for attention'. Critical analysis can identify concerns and gaps identifying where the organization is falling short of its desired benchmarks. It is important that an issue be discussed to clarify perspectives and facts before moving forward.

Key questions to guide organizational and governance discussions include:

### Strategic Direction

- Do we have a clear strategic direction?
- Is the direction consistently pursued by council and administration?
- How do we measure and celebrate progress and results?

### Policy Choices

- Does the decision-making process work well?
- How do we ensure good information to make decisions?
- Do we make good policy and ensure it is implemented?

### Service Delivery

- Are service expectations realistic given our organizational capacity?
- Are people satisfied with the quality of services that we provide?
- Do we provide services in the most efficient manner?

### Systems Coordination

- Do we have a positive and productive work environment?
- What ways do we ensure a high degree of performance and fiscal accountability?
- How do we maximize internal and external communication efforts?

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# 2 EFFECTIVENESS FACTORS

Achieving success is influenced by *internal factors* that relate to the competence and behaviours of people involved in the organization as well as its systems and processes. The internal human and technical elements must be aligned to achieve internal stability.

*External influences* also affect success. Societal and community trends along with public and stakeholder demands place pressures on the organization. To be effective, the organization must align its directions with the strategic imperatives of its environment.

## EXTERNAL ALIGNMENT

	<p><b>ENVIRONMENTAL Conditions</b></p> <p>Societal Trends Best Practices Other Agencies</p>	<p><b>SYSTEM Components</b></p> <p>Reliable Systems Clear Processes Adequate Resources</p>	
<b>EXTERNAL INFLUENCES</b>	<p><b>COMMUNITY Needs</b></p> <p>Public Expectations Stakeholder Demands Available Resources</p>	<p><b>HUMAN Elements</b></p> <p>Required Competencies Appropriate Behaviours Focused Effort</p>	<b>INTERNAL FACTORS</b>

## LOCAL ALIGNMENT

### EXPLORATIVE QUESTIONS

Use these questions to explore the impact of the 'effectiveness factors' on organization or governance success:

#### Environmental Conditions

- What are the significant external influences that impact our organization?
- How is our success impacted by other agencies?
- Are there some 'best practices' that would enhance our success?

#### Community Needs

- What are the prevailing public expectations of the organization?
- How do we sort out wants from needs among stakeholders?
- What resources are available in the community that can be mobilized?

#### System Components

- Do our systems and processes help us to achieve success?
- Are the various sub-systems linked and integrated?
- Can we improve the allocation and use of available resources?

#### Human Elements

- Are there behaviours that detract from our ability to achieve success?
- Do we have the skills required to respond to issues and opportunities?
- Can we improve employee, council or service performance?

# 3

## GOVERNANCE SUCCESS DISCUSSION

Ideally, *Success Indicators* are adopted **by Council** following each election. Should there be a change in council membership or CAO, council may wish to review and update its success indicators.

The *Organizational Success Discussion* should be done in a closed session meeting as it involves the performance of staff requiring and their privacy should be protected. The Chief Elected Official (CEO) chairs the discussion upon consent of Council to enter into 'closed session' (also known as in-camera) in accordance with enabling legislation. The CEO is expected to refer any discussion that is not appropriate for closed session to a regular meeting of council.

The *Organizational Success Discussion* should be regularly scheduled and include the CAO who will follow up on matters raised.

The discussions should reflect a two-way dialogue about how administration is impacting the governance functions of the political realm and likewise, how political activities affect staff activities in the administrative realm.

The CAO can also use the *Success Indicators* **with staff** to assess how the organization is doing and to improve organizational effectiveness.

The *Success Indicators* can be incorporated into staff performance plans to entrench expectations for organization performance at all levels of the organization.

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## ORGANIZATIONAL (CAO) SUCCESS INDICATORS

1. Adherence to defined political and administrative **roles and responsibilities**.
2. Efforts to develop and achieve **strategic directions**.
3. Ability to develop a smooth transition of **plans into action**.
4. Attention to monitor and recognize **organizational and staff performance**.
5. Facilitation of a positive and productive **organizational environment**.
6. Accountability for the efficient use of **organizational resources**.
7. Ensure complete information and discussion to arrive at **good decisions**.
8. Consistency of attention to **internal and external communication**.
9. Respect for **diverse opinions**.
10. State of organizational stability while addressing **changing conditions and issues**.
11. Evaluation of the satisfaction levels and efficiency of **service delivery**.
12. Maintenance of external **relations and partnerships**.
13. Honour the principles of **transparent processes and serving the public interest**.

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