

# REGIONAL COUNCIL SELF-ASSESSMENT AND RESOURCE TOOLKIT



PREPARED BY THE NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OF DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS  
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# REGIONAL COUNCIL SELF-ASSESSMENT AND RESOURCE TOOLKIT

The *Regional Council Self-Assessment and Resource Toolkit* is intended to assist executive directors of regional councils, along with policy board members, in conducting a basic organizational analysis.

The toolkit is based on extensive interviews, observations and input from national, state and local leaders involved in the regional council industry (including EDA's 381 Economic Development Districts). The toolkit is intended to help policy officials and executive directors think through the various aspects and challenges of governing and operating a highly successful regional council. It does not necessarily cover every aspect of regional council management, but it does provide a starting point for conducting an honest self-assessment of the overall condition of the organization.

Regional councils serve a unique role in public management. The positions of regional council executive director and policy board member offer major challenges and opportunities. The best training for executive directors is often on-the-job training and peer mentoring, even though most directors have post-graduate degrees in regional planning, public administration, business management or public policy. Since regional councils typically lack the traditional powers of local government, such as tax and bonding authority, regulatory enforcement, and planning and zoning ordinances, regional council leaders and staff must rely on a specific set of skills. These include building consensus and ownership, establishing credibility through the power of ideas and knowledge, and serving as public entrepreneurs and innovators.

Regional councils are political entities that must function politically—yet also in a nonpartisan manner—to be effective. While the majority of policy board members are politicians serving on the regional council governing body as local elected officials, executive directors should serve as “elderly statesmen” focused on managing a results-oriented, regionally-driven organization with an emphasis on promoting the long-term economic competitiveness and quality of place within the region.

We appreciate the leadership of the Missouri Association of Councils of Governments (MACOG) and the Midwest consortium project team of Brian Tapp of Iowa, Linda Weldon of Kansas, Tom Bliss of Missouri and Karl Elmshaeuser of Nebraska. We wish to express our appreciation to the SouthEast Regional Directors Institute (SERDI), an organization of the 112 regional council executive directors in the southeast United States. Many of the issues outlined in the self-assessment guide are based on SERDI's research, as well as additional analysis and findings by NADO, the Development District Association of Appalachia, and the Southwest Regional Executive Directors Association. Finally, we want to recognize the work of Professor Allan Wallis of the University of Colorado-Denver, Foraker Group and the Northland Institute.

## **DISCLAIMER**

**The Regional Council Self-Assessment and Resource Toolkit has been designed for individual use by executive directors interested in improving the overall performance and management of their regional planning and development organizations. The toolkit is set up with individual modules that cover a variety of professional and organizational development topics.**

**However, the toolkit offers a comprehensive framework that could be used for voluntary peer reviews and exchanges. It could also be used by regional council policy boards to evaluate and improve the overall governance, management, programs and operations of the regional council.**

**Any opinions, findings and conclusions or recommendations expressed in this publication are those of the authors and do not necessarily reflect the views of the U.S. Economic Development Administration (EDA), Missouri Association of Councils of Governments (MACOG) or the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).**

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# TAB A

## Era of New Regionalism: Positioning Your Regional Council in a New Landscape



# Era of New Regionalism:

## Positioning Your Regional Organization in an Evolving Landscape

**The concept of regionalism has been around for more than 50 years.** Within the regional council arena, the term *regionalism* is most often used to mean the goal of providing an environment for local government officials to work together across jurisdictional boundaries. These efforts are now typically focused on issues such as community and infrastructure development, economic development, housing, emergency preparedness, transportation, water resource planning and workforce development.

***Regional councils are NOT about regional government, city-county consolidation or taking decision-making authority away from local elected officials, communities and citizens.***

When most regional councils were formed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, they were often the only regional planning and development entity within their service area. Today, there are many other region-based groups that have emerged, including public, private, public-private, nonprofit and academic-based organizations.

Research compiled by NADO in recent years has identified at least five major reasons that may be influencing the renaissance of regional planning and development policy and approaches across the United States. These include:

1. **Rapid expansion and interconnectedness of global markets**, especially since the fall of the Iron Curtain in the 1980s and deployment of Internet infrastructure and technologies since the mid-1990s.
2. **Increased wealth, education and capitalism of emerging and developing nations**, including the BRIC countries (Brazil, Russia, India and China). As four of the world's most populated nations, there has been a massive expansion of the global workforce in the past two decades. In addition, the increased national, corporate and personal wealth in developing countries has resulted in a dramatic increase in the demand and cost of natural resources, goods, services and commodities. These dynamic changes result in complex economic, environmental, security and social issues.
3. **Modern mobile lifestyle of most American businesses and residents, who cross state and local jurisdictional boundaries on a routine basis** for access to global markets and goods, daily work commutes, access to health care services, trips for shopping, visiting family and other activities.
4. **Natural flows and patterns of vital resources such as air, land and water.** The behavior of one local area may have a dramatic impact on a neighboring area, whether a larger multi-state region, state or sub-state region.
5. **Significant cutbacks and budget shortfalls at all levels of government**, resulting in drive for cost savings, program efficiencies, institutional controls and performance, and public accountability.

## Defining Modern Regional Governance and Collaboration

The following section outlines the evolving concepts and focus of new regionalism, as presented by Professor Allan Wallis of the University of Colorado at Denver during NADO's annual training conference. New regionalism is focused on governance, process, open access and collaboration, rather than the older model of government, structure, closed or limited access, and coordination. Using the general principles below and the accompanying checklist, regional council leaders can evaluate how their organization fits in today's era of new regionalism.

- **Visioning** for the region.
- **Regional benchmarks** and indicators.
- **Leadership development** of advocates and champions for regional issues.
- **Formation of formal and informal networks** for social and professional interaction, knowledge sharing, trust building, and strategy implementation.
- **Collaboration and conflict resolution** to reduce inter-jurisdictional disputes, including today's "coop-etition" framework (work together to brand and market region, while also competing on more sub-regional issues).
- **Regional capacity** to foster regional dialogue, mobilize financial and human resources, and benchmark performance.

### Visioning for the Region

- **Establish an identity for the region**, including common branding and marketing strategies.
- **Establish governance structures and collaboration frameworks that are capable of creating and implementing policy goals and strategies**, especially focused on regional innovation, entrepreneurship development, knowledge sharing and program efficiencies.
- **Strive to transform a region** for economic, community and social progress.
- **Build from the distinguishing features and natural boundaries of the region**; the greatest challenge for regions, especially those with low capacity, is often to develop the ability to act regionally – overcome fragmented silos of the region which are often stuck in the old world.

## Regional Benchmarks and Indicators

- **Identify and set regional performance benchmarks and indicators** to evaluate performance and progress of the region, including comparisons to similar regions around the United States and the world.
- **Use data to map assets of the region to serve as a foundation for future regional collaboration and partnerships**, including synergies of public, private, philanthropic and nonprofit sectors.
- **Measure progress toward achieving regional goals and objectives**, including those of your local governments and regional council.

## Leadership Development of Regional Actors

- **Develop training forums and resources aimed at nurturing, assisting and promoting advocates and champions for regional issues** – spark plugs, boundary crossers, regional champions, etc.
- **Provide the tools, resources and support for regional leaders** working to build bridges across sectors and jurisdictions to help unify a region.
- **Host forums and venues** for formal and informal networking of regional leaders and actors, including social functions, policy dialogues and program innovation showcases.
- **Foster opportunities for local leaders and citizens to become active participants in your organization**, including through policy board, advisory committees, task forces and working groups, special projects and initiatives, community meetings, volunteer opportunities, internship programs and public events.
- **Recognize that regions rich in networks** are often in a better position to identify opportunities and mobilize resources to advance goals and strategies.

## Conflict Resolution and Collaboration

- **Remember that it is the nature of the beast that local jurisdictions within a region** will collaborate on selected activities, but still compete on others (known as “coop-etition”).
- Develop dispute resolution techniques and processes to resolve inter-jurisdictional conflict in a professional and timely manner – ***it is important to respectfully “agree to disagree” so local officials can work together on the next important issue!***



- **Balance the difference between being a “consultant” to local governments** and being a key resource/partner for local governments.

Modified from paper and presentation prepared by Allan Wallis, Ph.D., Associate Professor of Public Policy at the University of Colorado at Denver. Paper is titled, *The New Regionalism: Inventing Governance Structures for the Early Twenty-First Century*.

# TAB B

## Evaluating Your Regional Council's Role in a Modern Era of Regionalism



## **How to Use the Toolkit Evaluation Forms**

**The worksheets on the following pages are intended to help you evaluate your regional council's unique roles, functions and strengths within your state and region. The checklist is based on the theoretical principles of today's era of regionalism.**

**Provide a general ranking for each statement, followed by offering specific written thoughts and comments on your organization's assets, liabilities and opportunities.**

**The same format and worksheets are used in several other sections of the guidebook.**

# Evaluating Your Regional Council

## Role in a Modern Era of Regionalism

### 1. REGIONAL GOVERNANCE

	<i>Not so much</i>		<i>Totally!</i>		
	1	2	3	4	5
a. Our organization maintains fresh vision and mission statements with specific policies and strategies to achieve them.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Our organization has modified our culture over the years to continue serving local governments, yet also broadened our partnerships and relationships with private, nonprofit, philanthropic and academic institutions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

#### REGIONAL GOVERNANCE | COMMENTS AND NOTES:

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## 2. PROCESS

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
a. Our organization has developed strategic objectives, including a shared regional vision, comprehensive strategic action plan, conflict resolution process to facilitate local collaboration and pursuit of priority issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Our organization focuses more today on regional networks and collaborative frameworks, rather than structural alternatives such as city-county consolidation and special authorities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Our organizational focus is attuned to results and outcomes, rather than organizational structures, control and credit.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### PROCESS | COMMENTS AND NOTES:

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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### 3. OPEN ACCESS AND BOUNDARIES

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
a. Our organization actively promotes the mission of multi-jurisdictional collaboration among local governments within a clearly defined region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Our organization strives to promote open access and participation with our local government partners to our activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Our organization works to foster collaboration across local jurisdictional boundaries, including with our neighboring regions and across state lines when appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Our organization focuses on fostering regional collaboration among private, nonprofit and philanthropic sector leaders with our local elected officials, including overcoming traditional turf battles and stove piping of programs and services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Lack of organizational expertise, state creation of new regional service delivery areas and limitations of public funding are often a major barrier for regional councils. But, a national trend is emerging where regional councils may have a core service delivery area for planning, with flexible and varying boundaries for specific programs and services such as aging, business lending, homeland security, transportation and workforce programs. This statement reflects our current situation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Regional councils are increasingly sharing staff, providing back office support to neighboring regions and exchanging program administration responsibilities with neighboring regional councils. This statement reflects our current situation.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
g. Our organization defends its core service delivery territory and our turf ( <i>you are either in our region or you are out of the region!</i> ).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Our organization is more receptive today to partnering and sharing staff/organizational resources/programs with neighboring regional councils or even through our statewide association of regional councils.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Our policy board members are reluctant to expand our regional boundaries or allow staff to partner with neighboring regions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**EDITORS NOTE:** *Even though the issue of multi-regional collaboration and resource sharing can be very sensitive and controversial, it is becoming increasingly difficult, from a credibility perspective, for regional councils to promote regional collaboration at the local level, while at the same time being reluctant themselves to “walk the talk” of regional collaboration and partnerships across regional council organizations.*

**OPEN ACCESS AND BOUNDARIES | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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## 4. COLLABORATION

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
a. Our organization focuses on regional collaboration through voluntary agreements of equals, rather than the traditional hierarchical model of local government control and ownership.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Our organization places more emphasis on various players bringing resources, expertise and knowledge to the table as distinct yet more equal parts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Our organization only tends to participate in activities where we are the lead player or the controlling interest.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Our organization is comfortable collaborating with other statewide, regional and local entities and leaders, allowing each of us to bring a unique perspective, expertise and resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Our local government policy board members encourage our management and staff to pursue partnerships with private and nonprofit sector entities to advance our region's economic competitiveness and quality of life.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Private sector organizations and leaders are interested in working with our organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Our organization is an active participant and associate of business, industry and educational associations and alliances within our region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Our organization is an active partner of community-based organizations and philanthropic entities within our region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**COLLABORATION | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

▪ **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_

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▪ **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_

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▪ **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_

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▪ **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 5. TRUST

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
a. Our organization focuses on processes and procedures that are often inflexible and rigid, making it difficult for us to participate in new regional partnerships and alliances.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Our organization is focused on building trust and credibility with new partners, including private, nonprofit and philanthropic organizations and leaders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Our organization is fearful of new regional players and actors.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Our organization plays a specific role and function within our region, allowing us to more comfortably partner with new and existing regional and local entities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### TRUST | COMMENTS AND NOTES:

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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# TAB C

## Seven Significant Issues Facing Regional Councils



# Seven Significant Issues Facing Regional Councils

The SouthEast Regional Directors Institute (SERDI), an organization of the 112 regional council executive directors in the southeast United States, conducted a thorough evaluation and study of the most pressing issues confronting regional councils within its region. The issues outlined in the following section are based on the SERDI research, as well as additional national and regional analysis and findings by NADO, the Development District Association of Appalachia, Midwest Economic Development District Consortium and the Southwest Regional Executive Directors Association.

The SERDI research identified seven significant issues facing regional councils. These include:

1. **Relevance**
2. **Convener** of the Region
3. **Ownership** and Governance
4. **Relationship** with Local Government
5. **Relationships** with Federal and State Officials
6. **Statewide Uniformity** and Capacity
7. **Public Relations** / Image

These issues will be impacted by an executive director's skills as:

1. **Innovator:** Creative administrator who can invent new approaches and new methods as the need arises.
2. **Public entrepreneur:** Ability to develop and implement new concepts and ideas for the greater good of the region without traditional authorities, powers and funding resources of federal, state and local governments.
3. **Statesman:** Ability to shift gears at any given moment to deal with diversity of the region and the regional council, including the aptitude to understand and leverage the agendas and interests of each major constituency group (public officials, private sector leaders, funding agencies, media and staff).

As outlined in the self-assessment guidebook, our research found that internal management capacity is essential to addressing the seven significant issues. Regional council management issues, such as financial oversight, staffing and human resources, and program design and accountability, provide the foundation that allows the regional council to successfully tackle each of the seven significant issues.

Following is a brief overview of each issue, along with key questions and observations, which regional council executive directors and policy officials should discuss, consider and address.

“Regional councils are sometimes less bold in structure and authority than a region’s needs might warrant, yet more advanced than area politics comfortably accept.”

Managing Your Regional Council: Techniques for the Director, NARC (1978)

## Seven Significant Issues Facing Regional Councils

### 1. RELEVANCE

When most regional councils were formed in the late 1960s and early 1970s, they were often the only sub-state regional planning and development organization focused on areawide issues and needs within their service delivery region. Over the years, new regional organizations, with both general purpose focus and more targeted missions, have emerged across the nation.

*The following section is intended to help evaluate your regional council's current mission, purpose and focus within your sub-state area. It provides a general framework to evaluate if your organization is a key player within your state and region, meaning is your organization still relevant? Please provide a general ranking for your organization for each statement, followed by offering specific thoughts and comments.*

	<i>Not so much</i>		<i>Totally!</i>		
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
a. Our regional council is a key resource for moving our region forward in the 21 <sup>st</sup> century.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Our policy board members are engaged in setting the agenda and priorities for the organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Our policy board members can relay and explain to others the work, goals and accomplishments of our regional council.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. The mission and focus of our regional council is clearly defined, updated to today's environment and relevant to our region's challenges and opportunities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Our phone rings! Our <b>state officials</b> are eager for our organization to take a leadership role and to be a primary player in regional development issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Our phone rings! Our <b>local officials</b> are eager for our organization to take a leadership role and to be a primary player in regional development issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
g. We are asked to participate in regional and local initiatives with non-governmental partners and leaders, including private, nonprofit and philanthropic groups.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Our organization often serves as the primary convener or forum for public officials to work together on problems and solutions for the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Our organization often serves as the primary convener or forum for public officials to work together with private sector and community leaders on problems and solutions for the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. As executive director, I am engaged with each of the following key sectors within the region:					
▪ <b>Local governments</b> , including county and municipal elected officials as well as city/county managers, program managers and other career officials.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ <b>Private sector business and industry</b> , including chambers, EDCs, growth councils and business councils.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ <b>Education sector</b> , including K-12, community colleges and four year institutions, as well as workforce training providers and nonprofit agencies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ <b>Nonprofit organizations</b> , including aging, business development finance and technical assistance, community and economic development, housing, human services, transportation, workforce training and other related fields.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**RELEVANCE | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## Seven Significant Issues Facing Regional Councils

### 2. CONVENER OF THE REGION

One of the core principles of a regional council is to provide a neutral forum for local leaders to work together to address and solve areawide issues on a regional basis. While regional councils are public entities governed and associated with local government, the complexity and scope of today’s regional planning and development issues have become so intense and far reaching. Therefore, we have found that most high performing regional councils have broadened their governance structure, programs and services, and partnerships to include business, education, nonprofit and philanthropic sector leaders.

*The following section is intended to help evaluate your regional council’s role as a respected convener and actor within the region, both with the traditional constituency of local governments as well as a broader audience of regional actors such as business, education, nonprofit and philanthropic entities and leaders. Please provide specific responses and comments for each question and statement.*

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
a. As an executive director, I am proactive in providing leadership and a vision for the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. As a regional council, our organization is focused on providing the leadership and vision necessary for the region to remain competitive.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Our organization provides a forum for regional and local leaders to develop and implement a blueprint for the region’s future community and economic competitiveness.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Our organization fosters regional collaboration between local officials within the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Our organization fosters regional collaboration between local officials and private, philanthropic and nonprofit sector leaders within our region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
f. Our organization is aggressive in tapping into any available resource to advance the region, including public, private and philanthropic resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Our organization develops and offers sound proposals and plans for our local officials and other regional leaders to support, take ownership of or assume as their own ideas and vision.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Our organization has earned a reputation as a leader and consensus builder within the region, offering a team of policy board members, professional staff and external champions that can advance a proactive regional agenda.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**CONVENER OF THE REGION | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Seven Significant Issues Facing Regional Councils

### 3. OWNERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE

Regional councils are unique entities in public administration since they are typically governed primarily by local government officials, yet they also lack traditional local government powers such as taxing and bonding authority, zoning and ordinance controls, and planning and code enforcement.

While regional councils are governed and supported by local governments, most regional councils rely heavily on federal and state resources for program and operational support. More than 70-80 percent of the average regional council budget is derived from federal and state sources, with local government dues and fee-for-service contracts accounting for most of the remaining share. These dynamics and realities often result in a constant tug-of-war for control between local needs and priorities with mandates and demands by federal and state funding partners.

*The following section is intended to help evaluate ownership and governance issues facing your regional council. Please provide specific responses and comments for each question and statement.*

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

a. It is essential to have a clear understanding of who owns your regional council. How would you rate the level of ownership and control held by each of the following over your organization:

▪ Local elected officials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Federal agency funders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ State agency funders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Federal lawmakers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ State legislators	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Governor	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Business sector leaders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Executive director of regional council	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ General public	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
b. Our organization has modernized and modified our governance and leadership structure over the years to accommodate new goals, programs and services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Our organization has formed new nonprofits and other affiliates to accommodate new programs and services, while still maintaining appropriate control and oversight by the regional council policy board.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Our organization has placed a heavy emphasis on implementing checks and balances to maintain proper oversight, accountability and governance of affiliated nonprofits, programs and committees.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Our organization has limited itself to the same programs and services as our founding charter and focus areas.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Our regional council policy board is structured to attract the “movers-and-shakers” of the region, including representation from private sector.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Our organizational bylaws are very prescriptive on the allocation of board slots, especially with specific representation by county and municipal officials.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Our bylaws have evolved to give us some flexibility to identify and select thoughtful leaders and decision makers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Our organization is best described as:					
▪ Board driven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Customer driven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Staff driven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Program driven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Grant driven	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Combination of the above	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
j. Our policy board meetings are “must attend” events within the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Our policy board struggles to obtain a quorum at our regular meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Our policy board is open to exploring new techniques and formats to make sure board meetings are productive and informative.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Our organization evaluates and monitors the benefits and value that local elected officials and policy board members receive from attending board meetings, committee meetings and participating in our organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Our organization has designed our policy board meetings and other activities to shape aggressive and progressive strategies to advance the region and our individual local communities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. Our policy board members attend our meetings to:					
▪ Network with other board members	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Advance personal agendas	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Protect interests of locality	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Listen to staff reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Engage in informative policy and program discussions and problem solving for the region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Learn about new and existing federal and state funding resources	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Learn about new and existing federal and state regulations and rules	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Gain regional council support and assistance with local projects	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Other					

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
p. Our board meetings are designed to:					
▪ Promote board member networking	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Provide a forum for the pursuit of regional activities and initiatives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Allow staff to give program reports	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Chase federal and state grant money	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Attract high-level thought leaders, mover-and-shakers and decision-makers from the region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Other: _____					
q. Our organization measures the outcomes of our board meetings and board involvement.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
r. We set specific goals and objectives for our board and staff to pursue each year.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**OWNERSHIP AND GOVERNANCE | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Seven Significant Issues Facing Regional Councils

### 4. RELATIONSHIPS WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENTS

Most regional councils are established, whether by state law or executive order, as voluntary multi-jurisdictional entities owned and governed by local governments. However, in many cases, local elected and appointed officials:

- Are unaware of regional council functions, programs and services
- Do NOT realize regional councils are set-up to serve them
- Do NOT consider themselves as owners
- Are NOT engaged in the organization unless they serve on the regional council board or an advisory committee for a specific program, or have a specific grant or project need with the regional council

*The following section is intended to help evaluate your regional council's relationship with local governments, including counties and municipalities. Please provide specific responses and comments for each question and statement.*

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
a. County elected officials within our region are actively engaged in our regional council.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Municipal elected officials within our region are actively engaged in our regional council.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. County elected officials tend to designate others to participate in our organization rather than participate themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Municipal elected officials tend to designate others to participate in our organization rather than attend and engage themselves.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Our organization limits itself to the specific roles and responsibilities outlined in the original state enabling legislation or executive order that authorized the creation of our regional council.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
f. Our organization has worked to evolve our programs and services to meet the shifting needs and opportunities within the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. As executive director, I dedicate significant time each week to meet or talk with chief elected officials within our region, both county and municipal levels, as well as policy board members vs. non-board members.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. As executive director, I dedicate significant time each week to network, meet and talk with city and county managers and senior-level local government administrators within the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Local governments within our region turn to our regional council for assistance, advice and leadership as the first option, before asking consultants, universities or other groups for assistance, especially with planning, strategy development or program design.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Our organization tries hard to interact, network and partner with local economic development corporations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. As an executive director, I actively attend and participate in statewide and sub-state regional associations of county and municipal officials.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Representatives of our organization serve on committees, task forces and working groups related to our programs and interest areas for our state associations of counties and municipalities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
m. Our regional council provides specialized training, networking opportunities and forums for local government leaders and staff. This include forums to discuss regional issues, explore new ideas and problem solving solutions, examine regional trends and plans, and explore opportunities for new or expanded regional collaboration.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. It is clear who owns our regional organization:					
■ It is still exclusively local government	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ It has evolved to include private, nonprofit and other sector leaders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ There is the traditional tug-of-war between local officials vs. federal and state funders, policy officials and oversight agencies	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. As executive director, I am on a first-name basis with key leaders, policy makers and decision-makers within our region, such as:					
■ Local elected officials	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ County and city managers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Federal legislative staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Chamber of commerce leaders	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Community college and university leaders and executives	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Bankers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Local economic developers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Major businesses and industry executives and senior managers	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
■ Other					



	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
p. Local organizations besides local government turn to our organization for resources, leadership, technical assistance, partnerships and strategic assistance.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
q. Our organization involves local citizens, issue experts and retirees with specific skills in our activities and organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**RELATIONSHIP WITH LOCAL GOVERNMENT | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_
- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_

## Seven Significant Issues Facing Regional Councils

### 5. RELATIONSHIPS WITH FEDERAL AND STATE OFFICIALS

More than 70-80 percent of the typical regional council budget originates from federal or state sources, according to NADO research. Therefore, regional councils must be engaged and focused on building strong professional relationships, trust and credibility with federal and state officials. This includes elected officials, legislative staff, political and career officials at federal and state agencies, and national and state associations involved in communicating the message and priorities of regional councils.

***No one else cares about your regional council as much as you should as the executive director!***

It is in your self-interest as an executive director to maintain, build and nurture your relationships with federal and state officials.

*The following section is designed to help you and your regional council perform an honest self-assessment of your commitment and success in forging strong professional ties with key federal and state policy makers and program administrators. Please provide specific responses and comments for each question and statement.*

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
a. Our organization spends considerable time and energy to build relationships with:					
▪ Governor and key gubernatorial staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ State legislators and key legislative staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ State agency directors and senior program staff	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Members of Congress and their staff in Washington and in the region	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Federal agency leaders, both political and career staff at HQ and field offices	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. While much of our organization’s operations and program budget comes from federal and state sources, our organization does not feel it is important to engage in federal and state advocacy efforts.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Our organization relies on our local policy officials to serve as our voice with federal and state policy makers, rather than our staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
d. Our organization collaborates with our federal and state officials to develop a strategic vision and action plan for the region, including regular participation in our board meetings and committee activities.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. As executive director, I serve as the “closer” for our organization in securing contracts and projects with our federal and state funding partners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Our organization has a clear strategy for building credibility, trust and awareness with our federal and state agencies and partners.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Our federal and state policymakers (including staff) rely on our organization to learn about and keep track of key regional and local issues and projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Our organization participates in national and state trade and membership associations to advance and keep track of important policy, programmatic and funding issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. As executive director, I spend considerable time reading reports and literature, participating in legislative and policy conference calls, attending Washington policy conferences and serving on policy committees and working groups of national and state trade associations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Our federal and state elected leaders from the region know and respect our organization and call on us for feedback on policy issues, background on projects and assistance with priority issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	

k. List the name and rate your relationships with each of the following federal officials:

**DC Staff Directors for U.S. Senators**

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Key DC Legislative Aides for U.S. Senators**

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Chief of Staff for U.S. House Members**

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Legislative Director for U.S. House Members**

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Schedulers for U.S. House Members**

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Key DC Contact for Federal Funding Agencies**

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
1	2	3	4	5

**I. List the name and rate your relationships with each of the following state officials:**

**Chief of Staff for Governor**

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Scheduler / Gatekeeper for Governor**

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Relationship with Senators**

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Relationship with State House Members**

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Contacts with State Legislative Branch Committee and Leadership Staff**

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_

**Key Contacts with State Agencies**

- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_
- Name: \_\_\_\_\_

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
1	2	3	4	5

**m. Our regional council:**

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Invites federal and state elected officials to attend and participate in our regular board meetings, special events and program rollouts.</li> </ul>  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Meets with federal elected officials at least once each year in Washington, DC and with our state officials at least a couple times each legislative session.</li> </ul>                      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Conducts on-site tours with our federal and state elected officials as a follow-up to ribbon-cutting ceremonies to show policymakers the long-term impact of their support.</li> </ul>        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Participates in the NADO Congressional Partnership Awards program and/or provides additional recognition and appreciation for our members of Congress.</li> </ul>                             | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Implements a clearly defined and updated strategy for expressing our appreciation and support for federal and state legislators and other key federal and state leaders.</li> </ul>           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Offers to hold informal brainstorming or strategy sessions (or serve as kitchen cabinet resource) to help federal and state elected officials address their top policy priorities.</li> </ul> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**RELATIONSHIP WITH FEDERAL AND STATE OFFICIALS | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
  
- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

## Seven Significant Issues Facing Regional Councils

### 6. STATEWIDE UNIFORMITY AND CAPACITY

One of the most prevalent issues facing regional councils is the dreaded “weak sibling” syndrome. It is an easy excuse for federal and state policymakers to push you and your regional council aside by stating that “we’d like to work with you, but we can’t rely on the other regional councils in the nation/state/part of the state. We really respect and appreciate your work, but it is the other guys that we don’t trust/like/know.”

Regional councils are often perceived by the outside world as a national/statewide network or delivery system and held accountable together. Therefore, regional councils, especially within a state, should focus on statewide peer accountability, quality and performance standards, organizational and professional standards, and consistency in program design, deliverables and accountability.

**Regional councils can always retain local control, flexibility and governing decision making;** yet also pursue common statewide (and national) skill sets, core program areas and staff capacities.

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
a. <b>Our regional council and state association of regional councils are tackling issues such as:</b>					
▪ Common skills and capacity of executive directors, program staff and policy boards	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Peer accountability, mentoring and information exchanges	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Statewide branding, marketing and message delivery	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Multi-region collaboration, including joint program delivery and sharing of staff resources and expertise with other regional councils	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Statewide program and planning product templates, such as CEDS, RPO/MPO plans, GIS data quality and consistency, RLF loan documents, and emergency management plans	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ Professional development standards, ethics and training, including focus on financial management, board development and federal/state program compliance	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**STATEWIDE CONFORMITY AND CAPACITY | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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## Seven Significant Issues Facing Regional Councils

### 7. PUBLIC RELATIONS AND IMAGE

Regional councils often follow the tradition of being “behind-the-scenes” players that are seen but rarely heard. This can translate into damaging perceptions by funding agencies, federal and state policymakers, and local government elected and appointed officials.

Regional council executive directors need to put their elected officials and policy board members in the spotlight, while also marketing and communicating the accomplishments, value and services of the regional council. In addition, regional councils can maintain their traditional focus on substance, yet also improve their own marketing and appearance. In the modern era of the Internet, an organization’s first impression is often created by your Web site, publications and other print/electronic media.

**In the modern era of the Internet, an organization’s first impression is often created by your Web site, publications and other print/electronic media.**

**Image can be a real impediment for regional councils at the federal, state and local levels!** For example, when you set up an appointment with a congressional staffer, state agency funder or private sector leader, their first task before the meeting is most likely to conduct a “Google” search of your organization to learn about your mission and programs, research your priorities and plans, and determine if you are a valued, trusted and reliable partner.

*The following section is designed to help your regional council evaluate your attention to promoting a world-class image and appearance in today’s modern communications era.*

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
a. As a regional council executive director, I place a high priority on building a solid public relations image and appearance. This includes our Web site, annual report, grant applications, newsletters, regional plans and other electronic and print materials.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
b. Our organization has the internal capacity to develop first-class publications, reports and Web sites, including graphic and Web designers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Our organization invests/contracts with professional marketing and design specialists to help us create and portray a professional, quality image for our organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Since regional councils are in the business of building regional consensus, using data and analysis to influence effective plans, strategies and investments, and disseminating policy and funding information, we agree that our regional council should place an emphasis on developing more effective communication tools. This include a professional Web site, increased use of new social networking tools (i.e Facebook, Twitter, etc) and other new technology tools.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Our regional council reports, publications and other communications NO LONGER place such a heavy emphasis on reporting progress on “process” such as amount of money secured and leveraged, number of applications submitted and volume of grants administered. Instead we now stress the “real world” outcomes and results of our activities, such as how they directly impact people through improved environmental quality, better pay and benefits, improved public safety or improved quality of place and life within our region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Our organization studies and evaluates the public perceptions that key stakeholders may have towards our organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>	
1	2	3	4	5	

g. Our organization is taking steps to:

- **Make a successful first impression,** including through a professionally-designed Web site, CEDS report, transportation plan, etc.
- **Present a professional image** in newsletters, grant applications, annual reports and other print and online materials.
- **Participate in statewide, regional and local coalitions, alliances and organizations,** including public, private and nonprofit organizations.
- **Exhibit a willingness to staff and support special initiatives** or incubate new organizations and programs.
- **Establish a culture of innovation,** entrepreneurship and calculated risk-management with new ideas, programs and services.
- **Serve as a valued thought leader** for the region.

h. Our regional council has a specific strategy and action plan for building the reputation, capacity, willingness, leadership and culture of being a regional leader. This includes working towards being a:

- **Respected and valued forum** for local officials and leaders to address areawide issues through regional strategies, partnerships and solutions.
- **Place to bring together public, private and nonprofit leaders** to strengthen regional collaboration across jurisdictional and sector boundaries.

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
▪ <b>“Go to” resource</b> for understanding, tapping into and securing federal and/or state community and economic development resources.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ <b>Reliable program administrator</b> of federal and state funds.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
▪ <b>Valued technical assistance provider</b> to meet current regional and community goals and needs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**PUBLIC RELATIONS AND IMAGE | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**TAB D**

# **Managing An Effective**

# **Regional Council**

# **Policy Board**

**Checklists and Resources for**

**Regional Council Policy Board Members**

**and Executive Directors**



# Regional Council Policy Board: Evaluating Basic Roles and Functions

A major asset of regional councils is the involvement, ownership and connections of local elected officials and other key policy board members. The most effective and performance-driven regional councils tend to have an engaged, informed and proactive policy board. Following are basic roles, functions and operating principles that should be considered by regional council policy board members.

*Please provide specific responses and comments for each question and statement.*

## 1. Establish Policy

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
1	2	3	4	5

**Our policy board:**

- a. Focuses on meeting the overall needs of our region, not just their own individual communities.
- b. Sets the policies and strategic direction that guide our regional council to run effectively, legally and ethically.
- c. Advocates the use of our regional council to serve as a primary convener, regional planning expert and technical assistance resources to address regional goals and issues.
- d. Has developed the policy and governance framework that is needed to allow management and staff to implement the vision and priorities of the board.

**POLICY BOARD: ESTABLISH EFFECTIVE POLICIES | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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## 2. Establish a Partnership with the Regional Council Executive Director

<i>Not so much</i>					<i>Totally!</i>
1	2	3	4	5	

### Our policy board:

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Sets overall policies and guidelines that govern the authority, responsibility, accountability and performance evaluation of the executive director.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Provides the support necessary for the executive director and staff to succeed in advancing the goals and priorities of the board.                    | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Allows the executive director to manage the day-to-day operations of the regional council, without micromanaging staffing and programmatic decisions. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Remembers that our regional council is NOT always under the same rules and restrictions as local government.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**POLICY BOARD: PARTNERSHIP WITH EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_

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### 3. Regional Vision

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
1	2	3	4	5

**Our policy board:**

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Shares a common vision, sense of mission and clearly identified goals at the board level.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Takes the long-term view with incremental performance measures to evaluate progress of the regional council.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Places an emphasis on developing a regional development roadmap with performance benchmarks and measurements compared with other similar regions in the nation. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Focuses on putting difficult decisions into the larger regional context and perspective, rather than just interests of individual communities.                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Remembers that organizational risk taking is essential for progress and innovation.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**POLICY BOARD: NURTURE A REGIONAL VISION | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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## 4. Direction through Strategic Planning

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
<b>Our policy board:</b>					
a. Conducts regular outreach and feedback sessions with rank-and-file members of the regional council membership.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Limits input and feedback only from members of the board.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Conducts regular and thorough strategic planning retreats and visioning sessions to establish long-term goals and objectives, as well as short-range tasks and action plans.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Assesses our organizational opportunities, threats, weaknesses and strengths on a regular basis.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Places a major emphasis on the implementation of our organization's strategic plan, including personal involvement in outreach and advocacy for the organization at federal, state and local levels.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**POLICY BOARD: DIRECTION THROUGH STRATEGIC PLANNING | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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## 5. Financial Integrity of the Organization

<i>Not so much</i>					<i>Totally!</i>
1	2	3	4	5	

### Our policy board:

- |   |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Makes sure board members have a firm grasp on the financial conditions, integrity and operations of the organization. This includes monitoring annual budget vs. expenditures, conducting an annual audit by independent CPA firm and maintaining a finance committee. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Delegates the day-to-day financial management to the executive director, yet maintains appropriate internal controls.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Monitors financial outcomes and performance, including financial reports at every board meeting and review of annual audit findings.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Maintains appropriate controls and oversight of nonprofit affiliates of the regional council.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Thinks long-term and big-picture about building the organization's financial foundation, not only annual profit and loss statements.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**POLICY BOARD: FINANCIAL INTEGRITY OF THE ORGANIZATION | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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## 6. Participate Responsibly

<i>Not so much</i>					<i>Totally!</i>
1	2	3	4	5	

### Our individual policy board members:

- |   |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Commit the time necessary to serve as a board member or designate senior-level alternates who are committed.                           | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Keep local politics in perspective to regional needs and priorities.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Review agenda materials prior to the meeting and are prepared to ask informed questions and provide good input.                        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Conduct their homework on the organization's activities, plans and programs, along with understanding the regional and local politics. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Keep the board working on a policy level, rather than micromanaging staff level decisions.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Address serious management issues that require board action or attention.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Are open to involving committees, advisory working groups and staff in the organization.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Take special assignments willingly and enthusiastically when asked.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Serve as goodwill ambassadors for the organization at the national, state, regional and local levels.                                  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j. Actively participate in membership retention and outreach.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
k. Support the organization’s public policy, programmatic and project agenda through advocacy.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Attend events and activities, including the annual conference, board meetings, educational seminars and planning meetings.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Speak for the board or the organization only when authorized and appropriate.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Maintain confidentiality of issues discussed in executive decision-making sessions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. Serve the whole organization, rather than any special interest group or constituency.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p. Avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest, especially on funding and personnel decisions.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
q. Disclose any possible conflicts in a timely and open fashion.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
r. Commit to continuous improvement of the organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**POLICY BOARD: PARTICIPATE RESPONSIBLY | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

▪ **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_

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▪ **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_

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▪ **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_

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▪ **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 7. Member Commitments

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>Our individual policy board members:</b>					
a. Know the goals, mission and programs/services of the organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Have defined roles and responsibilities as a board member, as outlined in a board member job description.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Provide constructive and timely feedback.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Respect and value diversity of thought and opinion of board members, executive director, staff and stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Develop trust and fight fair with other board members, management and staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Pitch in to help advance the mission of the organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Know how to solve problems and work toward solving problems and issues.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Focus on achieving positive results for the region and the regional council.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**POLICY BOARD: MEMBER COMMITMENTS | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

▪ **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_

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▪ **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_

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▪ **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_

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▪ **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_

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# Regional Council Policy Boards

## Basic Governance Practices of Effective Organizations

*Respond to each of the following statements with a yes/no answer, followed by offering brief written comments based on your personal experience.*

- **Board sets specific performance goals and benchmarks for the organization, including holding organization accountable for reaching key milestones and performance targets?**  Yes  No
  
- **Board meets at least bi-monthly with a regular meeting time and date?**  Yes  No
  
- **Board has strong attendance and no trouble meeting quorum requirements at regular meetings (which is basic measurement of the value placed on the organization by local officials)?**  
 Yes  No
  
- **Board focuses on policy level issues, including issues of regional significance, and identifies overall goals and strategies for making the region more economically competitive with a higher quality of life?**  Yes  No
  
- **All board members have copies of the state law and regulations, bylaws and other written policies and procedures that govern the organization and its affiliates?**  Yes  No
  
- **Board operates according to state law and regulations, organizational bylaws and other written policies and procedures?**  Yes  No
  
- **The board or its executive committee normally plans and reviews the board meeting agenda in advance of the meeting?**  Yes  No
  
- **Board meetings are typically conducted in the allotted time?**  Yes  No

- **Minutes, committee meeting information/results and staff reports are distributed to the board members at least a week in advance of board meetings?**  Yes  No
  
- **There are written job descriptions and conflict of interest guidelines for members of the board, committees, working groups and for staff?**  Yes  No
  
- **Board members receive regular financial reports and monitor the performance of the organization in relation to its budget, assets and liabilities?**  Yes  No
  
- **Board members receive the annual audit report by an independent accounting firm, and the board has an audit committee to serve as a liaison with the auditors?**  Yes  No
  
- **There is a policy manual containing all of the organization's written policies and procedures, including accounting, human resources/personnel, conflict of interest guidelines and grant management standards?**  Yes  No
  
- **Board has adopted quality of service goals and standards for the organization to follow?**  
 Yes  No
  
- **Board members regularly solicit the opinions, views and feedback of non-board member local government officials?**  Yes  No
  
- **Board members regularly solicit the opinions, views and feedback from federal and state policy makers and funders about the performance and services of the organization?**  Yes  No

Content is based on materials of the Nonprofit Sector Leadership Program, Dalhousie University, Canada.

# Regional Council Policy Board:

## Understanding Basic Roles and Functions of the Governing Body

A major asset of regional councils is the involvement, ownership and connections of local elected officials and other key policy board members. The most effective and performance-driven regional councils tend to have an engaged, informed and proactive policy board. The following are basic roles, functions and operating principles that should be considered by regional council policy board members.

### Evaluate Performance at All Levels

Board | Management | Finance | Staff | Relationships with external partners and constituents

### Establish Policy

1. Focus on the needs of your region and constituents
2. Focus on the common good of the region, not just your individual community
3. Set policies that guide the regional council to run effectively, legally and ethically
4. Recognize policy decisions as those that effect the region and regional council as a whole
5. Establish the policy and governance frameworks needed to allow management and staff to implement the vision and priorities of the board

### Establish a Partnership with the Executive Director

1. Set guidelines for authority, responsibility and accountability of the chief staff executive
2. Provide support necessary for management to succeed in advancing board goals and policies
3. Do NOT micromanage the day-to-day operations of the regional council and remember that the regional council is NOT the same as a local government

### Nurture a Vision

1. Establish a shared vision, sense of mission and common goals at the board level
2. Take the long-term view with incremental performance measures to evaluate progress
3. Focus on putting difficult decisions into perspective
4. Remember that risk taking is essential for progress and innovation

### Direction through Strategic Planning

1. Conduct regular outreach and feedback sessions with rank-n-file members of the regional council; Don't limit your input and feedback to only board members
2. Conduct regular and thorough strategic planning and strategy sessions to establish long-term goals and objectives, as well as short-range tasks and action plans
3. Assess organizational opportunities, threats, weaknesses and strengths on a regular basis



## Financial Integrity of the Organization

1. Make sure the board has a firm grasp on the financial conditions, integrity and operations of the organization, including monitoring annual budget vs. expenditures (including by major program), conducting an annual audit by an independent CPA firm and maintaining finance committee
2. Delegate the day-to-day financial management to the executive director
3. Monitor financial outcomes and performance, including financial reports at every board meeting and review of annual audit findings
4. Think long-term and big-picture, not only annual profit and loss statements

## Participate Responsibly

1. Commit the time necessary to serve as a board member or designate a senior-level alternate
2. Remind yourself on a regular basis of your role as a leader of the organization
3. Keep local politics in perspective to regional needs and priorities
4. Review agenda materials prior to the meeting and be prepared to ask informed questions
5. Do your homework on the organization's activities, plans and programs, along with understanding the regional and local politics
6. Keep the board working on a board level, rather than micromanaging management
7. If the organization has serious management issues that require board action or attention, be sure to understand the issue(s) from all perspectives
8. Be open to involving committees, advisory working groups and staff in the organization
9. Take special assignments willingly and enthusiastically when asked
10. Be a goodwill ambassador for the organization at the national, state, regional and local levels
11. Actively participate in membership retention and outreach
12. Support the organization's public policy, programmatic and project agenda through advocacy
13. Attend events and activities, including the annual conference, board meetings, educational seminars and planning meetings
14. Speak for the board or the organization only when authorized and appropriate
15. Maintain confidentiality of issues discussed in executive decision-making sessions
16. Serve the whole organization, rather than any special interest group or constituency
17. Avoid even the appearance of conflict of interest
18. Disclose any possible conflicts in a timely and open fashion
19. Commit to continuous improvement of the organization

## Member Commitments

1. Know the goals, mission and programs/services of the organization
2. Know your role as a board member
3. Provide constructive and timely feedback
4. Respect and value diversity of thought and opinion
5. Develop trust and fight fair with other board members, management and staff
6. Pitch in to help advance the mission of the organization
7. Know how to solve problems and work toward solving problems and issues
8. Focus on achieving positive results for the region and the regional council

# Individual Members of Regional Council Policy Board

## Resource Checklist for Policy Board Members

### Keep Informed

- **Be prepared for meetings.** Prior to regularly scheduled board and committee meetings, be sure to read staff reports, draft and proposed plans, program reports, and meeting materials and minutes.
- **Stay informed of important organizational management and operational issues,** such as budget and audit reports, work program reports, statewide and regional partnerships and programs, and federal and state policy decisions and events.
- **Attend national and statewide events, as well as read national and state level publications** to stay current on federal policy and program activities, national and state program innovations, and industry trends and conditions.

### Be a Leader

- **Attend and participate in all regional council meetings.** Only designate an alternate if you cannot make meetings or another person has more expertise and interest in the subject area.
- **Remember that you, as a policy board member, are an owner of the regional council.** Be sure to ask timely and appropriate questions, engage in the decision-making process, and learn about the subject areas being discussed at the meetings.
- **Use your expertise and skills to advance the goals and mission of the regional council,** whether it is political knowledge and relationships, public speaking / communications, “behind the scenes” consensus builder, issue area expert, or regional thinker and visionary.
- **Build professional relationships and networks with policy officials from around the region, not just your county or city.** One of the most valuable roles of the regional council is to build trust and cooperation of local officials within a region, and this takes tremendous confidence, trust and understanding of each jurisdictions’ needs, priorities and view point.

### Spread the Gospel Back Home

- **Keep your colleagues back home informed** of regional council issues, programs and decisions, especially results and outcomes of programs and projects.
- **Let your colleagues know about regional activities** that would benefit or involve your local community / jurisdiction.
- **Host a regular meeting** of the regional council policy board within your region to showcase special projects, programs and achievements, especially programs/facilities that have benefitted from the work of the regional council.

# Regional Council Policy Board Member

## Sample Job Description

### Roles and Responsibilities

- Define and oversee the mission of the regional council and keep it relevant to the needs of the region and its individual local governments and communities
- Approve programs and services and monitor their effectiveness and usefulness
- Provide strategic guidance to the organization and the chief executive officer
- Ensure financial solvency, integrity and soundness, including through fundraising assistance
- Select, support and evaluate the chief executive officer
- Ensure continuous board improvement and engagement

### As a member of the regional council board, I commit to:

- Attend each meeting of the board or make sure an alternate is present
- Participate in the board's annual retreat
- Participate in statewide and regional activities of the organization, as needed and requested
- Serve on at least one board committee
- Hold the regional council to a high standard of performance and integrity
- Conduct my homework for board meetings and board member assignments, including developing a basic understanding of each program and service of the regional council
- Read the materials sent to the board and membership, and be prepared to ask timely and informed questions and to provide honest and constructive feedback
- Listen carefully to other board members and staff with an open mind and an objective perspective
- Promote decisions and solutions that are in the best interest of the region and the organization
- Respect the confidentiality of the board's business

### I agree to be informed about and to observe the following board policies in our manual:

- Avoidance of conflict of interest
- Equal opportunity and avoidance of discrimination
- Enrollment in board liability insurance program

Signed: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

# Regional Council Policy Board

## Orientation Ideas for New Policy Officials and Board Members

- a. **Conduct an orientation meeting with each new elected official and policy board member:**
  - Talk about the organization's mission, programs, special projects and resources.
  - Review bylaws, policies and procedures, budget resources and strategic plan.
  - Provide copies of annual reports, newsletters, program updates and other materials.
  - Review the region's Comprehensive Economic Development Strategy (CEDS) since it often gives a good overview of the region, lists pending projects and priorities, and describes the organization's mission, work program and results.
- b. **Ask policy board chair and members** to meet with new policy board members and other elected officials to share benefits of your regional council from a policy official perspective.
- c. **Share the goals of the regional council and why it was formed:** to foster solutions, partnerships and strategies for areawide issues that cross local jurisdictional boundaries.
- d. **Explain how regional councils are different than local governments:**
  - Regional council policy officials are appointed or designated to serve, rather than elected directly by the people to the regional council.
  - Regional councils are intended to provide a forum for dealing with regional issues that need regional solutions.
  - Regional councils are voluntary planning bodies formed by local governments; organizational structure is typically as a sub-state unit of government, nonprofit or quasi-governmental form.
  - Regional council responsibilities are primarily assigned by local government policy leaders, in addition to federal, state and local legislation, regulations or program funding requirements.
  - Regional councils traditionally do NOT have local government authority such as taxation, zoning and ordinance controls, or eminent domain powers.
  - Regional councils must raise program and operations funding through federal and state grants and aid, local government dues support, fee-for-service initiatives, business and community lending loan funds and other means.
  - Regional councils often serve as advocates and intermediaries for local governments with federal and state policy and program officials.
- e. **Stress importance of being a regional leader -- the art of compromise is an essential skill in regional council affairs,** especially when balancing the views and positions of local voters and constituencies with the priorities and needs of the larger region.
- f. **Talk about who owns your regional council;** reinforce the fact that local governments are the primary shareholders of your regional council.

g. **Discuss the primary roles of regional council policy officials:**

- Determine and oversee the annual budget and work program of the regional council.
- Set regional policies, strategies and projects, including regional plans, programs and investment priorities developed by the regional council.
- Conduct outreach to federal and state officials, in addition to local peers within the region about the programs, plans and goals of the regional council.
- Experiment with new ideas and new approaches to multi-jurisdictional collaboration, planning and program delivery.
- Hire and evaluate the performance of the executive director.

h. **Allow executive director to run and manage the day-to-day operations** within the policies and procedures set by the policy board.



### ***Tips for Effective Regional Council Policy Boards***

- ✓ **Off-site strategic planning retreats** for board members, including social networking, trust building, issue discussions and strategic visioning for the region and regional council.
- ✓ **Action-oriented board meetings** with timely, pertinent and useful information.
- ✓ **Meetings with key federal and state officials**, including office visits, project tours and social events.
- ✓ **Host forums and events** with high-profile international, national, state and regional leaders at board meetings, State of the Region forums and issue specific events. *(Don't forget to invite and involve private sector and nonprofit sector leaders from the region!)*
- ✓ **Move board meetings around the region** to showcase local innovations and projects – and to build friendly competition among board members, increase pride and ownership in the regional council, and build organizational loyalty and ownership.

# Regional Council Policy Board

## Due Diligence Checklist for New Board Members

The following checklist is designed to serve as a basic due diligence checklist for individuals preparing to serve on a regional council policy board.

- 1. Read the organization's founding legislative or executive order, bylaws, board and committee minutes and progress reports for at least the past two years to learn about its stated purpose, activities and concerns.** These documents should already be available as they are part of a binder maintained for each board member on a continuous basis. This will give a new board member an understanding of what the organization is about and how it must be legally governed.
- 2. Obtain a current list of board and committee members and meet with the board chair, sample of board members and the organization's chief executive officer to determine what is expected of board members.** This will give new board members a better understanding of the organization's culture, programs, governance structure and mission.
- 3. Review the organization's IRS Form 990 (or other federal tax forms) and audited financial statements for at least the last two years as well as its current financial reports to see how the organization uses its assets and to evaluate its financial health.** Each regional council is structured differently, whether a sub-state unit of government, nonprofit or quasi-governmental entity so the public openness and availability of IRS tax forms and annual audit may vary.
- 4. Obtain an understanding of the board and committee structures of the organization and how internal controls are used to monitor the operations of the organization.** Ask for and read policies and procedures, including guidelines for accounting, human resource management, finances and annual audit.
- 5. Understand the organization's mission, learn about its programs, read its publications, reports and Web site, and talk to board members, management and staff (with knowledge of chief executive officer).** Regional councils are often complex organizations with a broad range of programs and services, which can be confusing and arcane. Be sure to ask for in-depth briefings from management about the specific mission, goals and functions of each program, including funding

sources, federal and/or state mandates, and impact on the region. It is also important to hear firsthand from program staff about specific programs.

**6. Review the organizational chart and understand the accountability structure of the organization.**

Remember that the board should hire the chief executive/staff officer, who is responsible for the day-to-day management and operations of the organization, including hiring, firing and evaluation of employees.

**7. Make sure there is a conflict of interest policy and form, along with a general code of ethics in place and that it is periodically reviewed and updated.** It is now typically required by various federal and state programs that grantees have conflict of interest policies and procedures for policy board members, management and staff.

**8. Be sure to receive and review the regional council's annual budget, audit and financial statements,** in addition to making sure the organization has insurance coverage, including Directors and Officers liability insurance, general liability coverage and employee fidelity insurance.

**9. Remember that the regional council is focused on addressing areawide issues that require regional solutions and attention.** While the regional council may become involved in programs and services for an individual jurisdiction, its primary focus should be on regional programs and services that cross jurisdictional boundaries (except technical assistance requests for specific needs, plans and projects, especially in more rural communities, or federal and state mandates of certain programs such as AAAs, EDDs, LDDs, MPOs and WIBs).

**10. Make sure to devote the time and energy expected of a board member.** A regional council is often only as strong and productive as its policy board will allow and expect. A strong policy board typically translates into a strong and vibrant regional council.

Modified from a presentation made by the Foraker Group to the National Association of Development Organizations (NADO).

# TAB E

## Regional Council Executive Directors

Self-Evaluation Checklists, Resources and Tip Sheets





# Regional Council Executive Directors: Becoming a Valued Resource for Your Region

**Regional council executive directors are a unique breed – *there is no academic or classroom setting that will prepare an executive director for the real world challenges of managing a policy board of local elected officials, relying on federal and state officials for program and operations funding, and influencing positive change without the traditional powers of government!***

**Executive directors must develop skills of a politician, with an emphasis on politics with a small p** (meaning you must understand politics, personal agendas of politicians at federal, state and local levels; roles of politicians as policymakers and decision makers; and various pressure points and interests of contributors, constituencies and voters)

**Executive directors must also possess skills of a bureaucrat, with an emphasis on government bureaucrat with a small b** (meaning you must understand the “in’s and out’s” of the bureaucratic machines at the federal, state and local levels – how are grant awards decided; what are the rules and nuances of administering various funding programs; how can you influence legislation, regulations and program guidance; and how do you secure and balance funding for your region vs. your organization?)

**Executive directors must observe and understand the world of politics, yet not participate in partisan politics.** As an executive director, you must respect the role of politics and elected officials in shaping your ability to perform your job and run your organization. These are the rules of the game. Therefore, regional council executive directors should:

- **Spend the time necessary to build solid professional relationships with key elected officials (and their staff) at the federal, state and local levels.** This includes schedulers, legislative directors, legislative assistants and staff directors.
- **Provide elected officials and their staff with concise, timely and pertinent information about key programs, projects and initiatives within your region** – keep them in the know, let them be the face of the issue or project, and always be honest, reliable and accurate with your information!
- **Commit the time, resources and energy required to maintain positive working relationships with federal and state officials, including elected officials and agency executives.** Since more than 70 percent of the typical regional council budget is derived from federal and state funds, you and your regional council most likely depend on the support of federal and state officials to advance your regional agenda.

# GENERAL ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST

## FOR REGIONAL COUNCIL POLICY BOARD MEMBERS AND EXECUTIVE DIRECTORS

The following is a basic framework for a SWOT analysis of your regional council from the perspective of the executive director, policy board member or senior program director.

- What are the **top three priorities** of the organization?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
- What are the **top three major strengths** of the organization?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
- What are the **top three major strengths** of you as executive director / policy member / senior program staff?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
- How do you **use your personal strengths** to improve the organization?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
- How do you use the **individual strengths of policy board members, executive director and/or staff** to advance the mission and goals of the organization?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.

- What are the **top three major weaknesses** of the organization?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  
- What are the **top three major weaknesses** of you as executive director / policy member / senior program staff?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  
- How do you **compensate for your personal weaknesses** to still allow the organization to overcome these shortcomings?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  
- How do you overcome the **individual personal weaknesses of your policy board members, executive director and/or staff** to still advance the mission and goals of the organization?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  
- What are the **top three major threats facing** the organization?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.

- What specific plans and strategies has the organization developed to **address these threats**?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  
- What are the **top three major opportunities** facing the organization?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  
- What specific plans and strategies has the organization developed to **take advantage of these opportunities**?
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  
- **Additional thoughts and comments about the assets of the organization.**
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.
  
- **Additional thoughts and comments about the liabilities of the organization.**
  - 1.
  - 2.
  - 3.

Modified from materials developed for the Peer 500 Review program by the Northland Institute.

# GENERAL ORGANIZATIONAL ASSESSMENT CHECKLIST FOR REGIONAL COUNCIL POLICY EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR

The following is a basic self-assessment guide to evaluate the internal management and operations of your regional council. It is based on lessons learned, peer evaluations and meeting materials developed for the Peer 500 Review program of the Northland Institute in the late 1990s. The program involved the leadership and management of NADO, along with representatives of EDA and the Ford Foundation.

## 1. GENERAL MANAGEMENT

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>As executive director, I:</b>					
a. Am clear about the purpose, goals and objectives of our regional council.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Clearly communicate these goals and objectives to our employees, as well as the board and external stakeholders.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Focus on implementing a long-range plan for the development and management of new and existing programs and services. This includes time and methods for measuring and evaluating organizational progress, as well as opportunities for periodic adjustments and modifications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Maintain a management transition plan for my successor, as well as for replacement/turnover of policy board members and key program and support staff.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Set and evaluate short-range objectives and goals. Make adjustments as necessary. Take time to write goals, priorities and strategies, as well as involve policy board, committees, staff and external partners in formulating and evaluating progress and performance of the organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
f. Remember to mentor and engage new regional leaders in our organization, including policy board officials, committee members, external partners, staff and volunteers/citizens.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Develop and implement specific opportunities and actions for staff to participate and contribute to the organization's strategic planning.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**GENERAL MANAGEMENT | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 2. ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
<b>As executive director, I:</b>					
a. Maintain a clear organizational structure (including organizational flow chart).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
b. Establish clear lines of supervisory control, reporting, responsibility, authority and accountability without conflicting requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
c. Evaluate need/preference for a more hierarchical structure with many layers of management versus a flatter management approach with fewer management layers.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
d. Maintain and implement proper checks and balances to oversee operations, finances and staff of our regional council programs. This includes corporations and affiliates operating under the overall umbrella of the regional council (such as 504 development corporation, AAA, MPO, EDD, WIB, real estate holding company or nonprofit).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
e. Make sure the finance officer reports directly to me as executive director.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Periodically review job descriptions for each employee, including for clarity, legal protections and staff flexibility.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Establish written job descriptions for policy board members, committees and advisory boards.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Foster open communications with and among management personnel, making sure to build a culture of trust, innovation, performance and integrity.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**ORGANIZATIONAL STRUCTURE | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

▪ **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

▪ **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_

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▪ **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_

▪ **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_

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\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### 3. MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
1	2	3	4	5

**As executive director, I:**

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Am sure to follow a basic management philosophy that is open, flexible, team oriented and results oriented. I stress integrity, innovation, collaboration, performance and having fun!  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Am careful about making hasty and impulsive decisions (especially personnel terminations or other significant personnel actions with legal ramifications) before soliciting the thoughts and views of policy board members, as well as senior management staff, outside mentors, legal counsel and/or an external sounding board/kitchen cabinet. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Try to give policy board members and staff the background and information needed to obtain full buy-in and support, when appropriate. Attempt to explain our rationale for major decisions, rather than leaving room for varying interpretations and rumors.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Work to establish professional trust and confidence in the abilities, skills and agendas of our policy board members, staff and external partners.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Conduct staff performance assessments on a regular basis, rather than waiting for annual performance reviews. I deal with board, personnel and staff issues before they become a major problem, as well as maintain an open and trustworthy relationship with our policy board.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
f. Encourage employees to provide “anonymous” feedback and recommendations to improve the management, performance and oversight of the organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Create a comfortable and open atmosphere so policy board members, staff and external partners provide me with honest and constructive feedback on ways to improve the organization’s performance, services and results.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**MANAGEMENT PHILOSOPHY | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**4. FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT**

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

**As executive director, I:**

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Invest the resources needed for adequate office space, technology and equipment required for the organization’s staff to perform cutting-edge regional planning and development activities. This includes technology-based tools such as GIS, social networking software and Web sites. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Designate a lead staff member as the technology coordinator / leader within the organization, including responsibility for maintaining, purchasing and understanding new products and tools.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Allocate the resources, time and training needed for employees to take advantage of new technologies and software related to their professional fields, including by using new and existing grant resources.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Ensure the organization has installed and tested a computer backup system(s) to protect data and electronic files, including security, confidentiality and safety of information and files.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Have a long-term plan for office space maintenance, whether we own our facility or rent/lease office space.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**FACILITIES AND EQUIPMENT | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_

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**5. PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT**

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

**As executive director, I:**

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Try to develop new programs and projects that address needs identified at the regional or local level, rather than only pursue and chase federal and state funding resources and priorities of the moment.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Develop and implement fee-for-service programs to address specific regional needs and opportunities. This is vital to overcome traditional reliance on federal and state funds, as well as address regional and local needs outside the restrictions of most federal and state funding.                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Place major emphasis on empowering staff to think about, design and pursue the development of new programs and ideas, including potential revenue sources and pricing.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Try to avoid setting culture where new ideas and innovations are driven only by me as the executive director; I encourage the sharing and development of new programs, services and strategies by policy board members, other local government officials, staff and external partners.                 | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Ensure our programs and services are evaluated, modified, terminated and/or reformed on a regular basis for performance accountability, value and benefits, budgeting and results. In addition, our organization has a strategic plan covering each program and service for short-term and long-range. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
f. Strive to build enough reserve funds and cash flow to support existing programs in time of political or funding changes (including program terminations at federal or state level).	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Focus on developing cash reserves so our organization can afford to launch new programs, including the flexibility to operate “loss leader” programs, either as a public good or as a start-up venture.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
h. Establish rewards and incentives for staff to attempt/pursue new ideas and programs.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Secure program development funding support from non-traditional sources, including foundations, private sector, individuals or other nonprofit organizations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Work to build the board culture so policy board members have the trust and confidence to support existing and new program development ideas and services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
k. Develop a comprehensive strategic plan to help position our organization for the next year, five years and decade, including program areas and services.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Avoid constantly operating in crisis mode or reacting to the fad of the moment. I try to be strategic and strive to match and integrate the goals of the current political leadership with the priorities and needs of the region.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>



**PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_

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## 6. PROJECT MANAGEMENT

Project management is an essential part of operating a successful regional council, regardless of the specific programs and functions of the organization. It is important to have clarity with each mission area and program of the organization. This includes thoroughness of work planning, project team structures, external and internal communications, proof reading of documents and work products, consistency in practice and quality, maintenance of records, coordination of services, project closeout activities and focus on results-oriented, performance-driven activities.

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

### NEGOTIATING AND CONTRACTING

As executive director, I:

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|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Make sure programs, projects and fee-for-service contracts are maintained, monitored and implemented as stated and designed. Standard contract formats are used when appropriate.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Make sure our organization has developed and follows a standard checklist for program compliance. This includes audit, progress report, financial reimbursement, accounting and work program implementation requirements for each contract, program and project. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Maintain regular oversight of employees and/or departmental compliance with federal and state funding agencies, in addition to fee-for-service type projects and contracts.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Keep our policy board informed of new programs, as well as problems with existing projects/programs.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| e. Remember to have legal counsel review contracts and agreements.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Review and monitor all contracts and funding agreements to make sure our organization is capable of (and meets) our work plans, including financial, technical and programmatic aspects.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
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**PROJECT PLANNING AND MANAGEMENT**

**As executive director, I:**

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| g. Make sure staff develop and follow a written scope of work, with program deliverables, goals, timelines and budgets, for each contract and program.                               | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Make sure project work plans and schedules are reviewed on a regular basis, including with senior management and staff.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Am sure to inform policy board of any compliance and liability issues.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j. Put the necessary checks and balances in place to monitor and control program deliverables, including costs, allocation of staff time, scheduling and project completion.         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| k. Balance staff workloads to ensure experienced and qualified employees are assigned to each major program, while also fostering the professional development of all staff members. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| l. Make sure staff document and coordinate all schedule, cost and scope of work changes with funders, oversight agencies and clients (including federal and state funding agencies). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| m. Require work segments or phases (data collection, preliminary development, grant applications, regional plans, etc.) are completed both on time and within budget.                | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
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**QUALITY MANAGEMENT PROCEDURES**

**As executive director, I:**

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| n. Establish quality management standards and procedures to guide our organization’s activities, both generally and with respect to specific products. I conduct regular reviews with staff to assure that quality standards and expectations are achieved.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| o. Implemented a formal process and procedures to check and proof all report drafts, analysis, financial statements, applications and other related documents for quality, accuracy and effectiveness. We use a standard checklist for each phase/activity to aid in checking internal documentation and deliverables for quality, accuracy and compliance.                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| p. Use our state association network to monitor, implement and design quality control standards for statewide planning, data and program deliverables. This includes developing templates or models for each statewide product for each regional council to follow, as well as sharing work products prior to final submission to funding agencies for accuracy, quality and compliance. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| q. Make sure our managers review oral and visual presentations by staff, including power points, for consistency with the organization’s mission, message, quality standards and tasks. We are sure to give staff training on effective public presentations / speaking skills, including the importance of understanding your audience and tips for delivering effective messages.      | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
r. Place an emphasis on producing products and communications that are clean, easy to read and professional quality. This includes use of high-quality photos and designs for reports and plans, Web sites and other print and electronic communications.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
s. Stress to staff that information is our primary source of credibility and influence as a regional council. Therefore, it is essential that our regional councils focus on the presentation and effectiveness of our communication tools and products.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
t. Have set aside the necessary resources so we can use a professional graphic designer (in-house or consultant) to assist in the layout, design and presentation of important information. This includes our planning documents, applications, newsletters, reports and other information that helps shape the public credibility and perceptions of our organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
u. Make sure contracts, work plans and products are amended over time to adjust for lessons learned, changes in the political environment and for new federal or state requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
v. Meet regularly with funding partners to communicate and evaluate our progress and to explore opportunities for additional funding and projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
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**PROJECT COMMUNICATION AND RECORDS**

**As executive director, I:**

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| w. Make sure our organization maintains and stores project files, communications and records, including financial records, for at least seven years. We keep grant files in proper order and in a secure location, including financial statements, budgets, amendments, project timelines, progress reports, copies of work products and any communications with funding agencies and subcontractors/sub grantees. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| x. Maintain and implement board approved written policies and standards for project communications and record keeping.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| y. Use an off-site or safe storage location to maintain dormant files with adequate retrieval time, good storage conditions and low cost. This includes for electronic storage and backup of computer files, as well as written materials.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| z. Emphasize the importance of accurate and well documented communications, including electronic and print communications and public presentations.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| aa. Worked with staff to develop and maintain a handbook and training materials for employees to learn about the organization’s goals, programs and services, customer-service standards, communications style and quality standards.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
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**PROJECT CLOSEOUT**

**As executive director, I:**

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| <p>bb. Make sure staff use a standard checklist to assist in closeout of grants and contracts with each funding agency or fee-for-service client, including a closeout conference / interview. This is important to ensure projects are completed to the satisfaction of each funding agency or client, as well as to assist in the improvement of our future products and services.</p> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>cc. Make sure our organization maintains and follows a written or standard policy concerning what materials are to be retained and for how long of a time period after project closeout. We make sure files are organized, safeguarded and stored in a central location, including electronic files and data.</p>   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| <p>dd. Conduct surveys, exit interview conferences and/or focus groups to evaluate and monitor our organization's overall performance and services. I understand this is essential to improving our products and services for the future and to reinforce the importance of quality controls and performance standards with our funders, clients, policy board and staff.</p>            | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**PROJECT MANAGEMENT | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**7. HUMAN RESOURCES AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

<i>Not so much</i>					<i>Totally!</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>	

**TRAINING AND PROFESSIONAL DEVELOPMENT**

**As executive director, I:**

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Encourage continued learning, professional development and training for each employee, including through participation and involvement in regional, statewide and national trade and professional associations.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Recognize and encourage advanced degrees or professional certifications for professional staff, including business development finance, planners, economic developers, finance and human resource professionals.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Reserve and provide financial assistance, along with adequate time, for employees to participate in professional development training, including post-graduate studies, technical skills curriculums, peer exchanges and online courses.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Institute a systematic process or plan to provide employees with professional development assistance. Written documentation and records are maintained to track and monitor employee participation, financial assistance, attendance and outcomes of professional development and training activities (including through employee performance reviews). | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	1	2	3	4	5
e. Encourage continuing education, conferences, workshops, on-the-job training and self-study to help develop employees' skills and knowledge in priority competencies – these include technical knowledge as well as life skills such as customer service, presentation skills and networking.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
f. Ensure employee evaluations include the level of participation by employees in professional development activities, as appropriate, including leadership roles in local, regional, statewide and national associations, societies and committees.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
g. Encourage training for employees to assist in the development of professional writing and presentation skills, especially for employees dealing with the public, local elected officials and funding agencies.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

### **Human Resources**

h. Maintain a standard written policy or procedures for recruiting new employees. We work to ensure procedures comply with all applicable federal and state regulations and laws, as well as make sure procedures are reviewed by legal counsel.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
i. Make sure our organization has written personnel manual and policies, including procedures for hiring, retaining and terminating employees. Our policies are reviewed and approved by the board and reviewed by legal counsel.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
j. Develop and implement written policies for handling resumes, responding to unsolicited applications, and filing data for potential employees. This includes a process for examining resumes, interviewing and negotiating with prospective employees.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
k. Verify certifications and degrees and conduct thorough reference checks for new employees, including obtain approval to conduct credit check for employees involved with organizational finances.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
l. Provide new employees with an organizational orientation, including copies of personnel, financial and operations guidelines, bylaws, job description, related grant materials and program requirements.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
m. Require new and existing employees to sign organization's personnel handbook and agree to terms of employment.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
n. Talk with each employee about their potential career path, professional development and organizational goals and expectations.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
o. Try to avoid significant staff turnover within the organization, since this can be costly, result in organizational instability and create public perception problems. When we hire younger workers, we try to develop a professional growth plan for each worker. When we hire more experienced individuals, we try to give them the freedom to operate and succeed. We also tap into local community colleges, four-year colleges and universities and other local technical colleges and programs for interns and special projects.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
p. Conduct periodic evaluations of employee performance. We also make sure employees receive a written record of their performance and recommendations for improvement. We provide opportunities for employees to offer suggestions and recommendations to improve their own performance, as well as improve the overall organization.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

	<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
	<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>
q. Evaluate organizational management structure on a periodic basis, including strengths and weaknesses of management-employee communications and teamwork.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
r. Maintain a salary range/schedule and job description for each position within the organization. Review salaries and benefits on a regular basis, including regional and industry comparisons, to maintain regional competitiveness with our policy board.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
s. Educate employees about their full compensation package, including value of retirement benefits, health care, long-term disability and other related perks and benefits (this includes annual cost increases, especially with health care). I stress the total value and cost of position beyond just salary.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
t. Evaluate and monitor the perceptions among employees concerning salary and performance awards and administration. I understand that these issues tend to have a major influence on organizational performance, culture and satisfaction.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
u. Strive to maintain competitive salaries and benefits for the region. We conduct or obtain compensation surveys and information from national, state and local sources. We make sure our policy board is informed and supportive of the need to maintain a first-class workforce.	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**HUMAN RESOURCES MANAGEMENT | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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**8. FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT**

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
<b>1</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>5</b>

**MEASURES OF FINANCIAL PERFORMANCE**

**As executive director, I:**

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| a. Establish a clear and transparent system for measuring and monitoring our organization’s financial performance, including monthly financial statements for the overall organization and each individual cost center / program code.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| b. Maintain a logical and easy way to follow an audit trail, providing for cross checking and verification of all financial records.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| c. Review monthly financial reports for the organization and each program (and with our policy board and/or executive committee, as appropriate) with the comparative information needed to assess the organization’s status and financial condition in relation to actual and budgeted goals. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| d. Provide regular updates to policy board on the organization’s annual budget, including specific estimates and actual for each grant, project and event. I make sure our policy board reviews and approves financial reports on a regular basis.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
1	2	3	4	5

**OVERHEAD CONTROL AND AUDITS**

**As executive director, I:**

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|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| e. Make sure the organization maintains an updated and detailed chart of accounts and program codes, which are used and understood by staff and management. The level of detail is appropriate for the complexity of our operations. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| f. Make sure our overhead and/or indirect costs are reviewed, adjusted and monitored on a regular basis to ensure compliance with federal and state rules.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| g. Stress that all staff, including finance and senior program managers, must be adequately familiar with government audit procedures and rules.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| h. Ensure our organization bids the contract for our auditor at least every three years or at least rotate our on-site audit review team at least every three years.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| i. Established an audit committee of policy board members to serve as a liaison with our auditors. We make sure our audit committee and policy board reviews and accepts the audit every year.                                       | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| j. Submit our annual audit report and any findings to the federal audit clearinghouse and related federal and state agencies every year.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
1	2	3	4	5

**BILLING PROCEDURES**

**As executive director, I:**

- |   |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|---|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| k. Make sure Invoices, reimbursement requests and financial progress reports are prepared in an orderly, consistent and timely manner.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| l. Implemented system so invoices, reimbursement requests and financial progress reports are double checked for accuracy and suitability prior to being sent to the client and/or funding agency. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| m. Direct staff to use standard federal forms or other standard forms as required and to conform with grant or contract agreements and conditions.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| n. Make sure writeoffs and write-ups are handled in a manner appropriate to the organization in a systematic and consistent manner.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| o. Monitor accounts receivables, including making sure that overdue invoices are pursued and collected with the desired level of aggressiveness and appropriateness.                              | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |



<i>Not so much</i>				<i>Totally!</i>
1	2	3	4	5

**MANAGEMENT OF EXPENSES, CASH AND SECURITY**

**As executive director, I:**

- |  |                          |                          |                          |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| p. Work with staff to make sure financial and accounting policies and procedures are written and available to all pertinent employees. Employees are provided with training and/or overviews of appropriate use of forms, procedures and policies.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| q. Work with staff to make sure expense account forms are easy to use, track and monitor. Expense forms and requests are reviewed by a manager and by me prior to final processing. Expense account policies and procedures are written and available to all employees.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| r. Monitor our operating budget and expenses monthly, including individual projects, programs, contracts and grants.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| s. Ensure cash flow projections are prepared routinely. (Written policies or goals may be useful for cash management, as well as to develop policies and/or goals for short-term interest-bearing accounts and mid-range and long-term investment accounts. Set up reserve accounts to protect and safeguard investments and excess cash.) | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| t. Store key organizational records in a secure location. We make and store duplicate copies of the most important records at an off-site location, including founding charters, tax forms and audits.   | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| u. Use a reputable software vendor for our accounting system. We test our accounting software or systems to ensure we have adequate capacity for federal grant management, including allocation and accounting of indirect rates.  | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

**FINANCIAL MANAGEMENT | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_  
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Modified with permission from the Northland Institute’s Peer 500 Review Program.

# TAB F

## State Associations of Regional Councils

Observations, Trends and Ideas for Progress



## State Associations of Regional Councils

Most often, statewide networks of regional councils are viewed by external stakeholders as a single delivery system – and too frequently are held back by organizations perceived to be weaker or underperforming. While it is essential for regional councils to maintain local control, accountability and programs targeted at regional needs, it is also increasingly vital that regional councils work together, both nationally and statewide, to strengthen their branding, performance, capacity and partnerships. *Following are some basic principles and ideas for maintaining a more effective statewide association.*

### **Why should policy officials, executive directors and senior professional staff of regional councils work together through a statewide association?**

- Face common needs, challenges, opportunities and issues
- Improve consistency, quality, coordination and delivery of federal and state programs
- Communicate a unified and consistent message to policymakers, funders and the public
- Develop new partnerships, programs and relationships
- Share best practices, test new ideas and innovations, and build and share organizational expertise, capacity and resources
- Practice what we preach about working across jurisdictional boundaries and overcoming traditional turf barriers

### **State associations can:**

- Serve as an important point of contact for federal and state officials, as well as other statewide organizations and partners
- Facilitate consensus of opinion among regional council policymakers and executive management staff
- Establish a clearinghouse to share news and notes on funding opportunities, program rule changes, pending legislative and regulatory issues, program innovations, and other important information related to the operations and management of a regional council
- Act as a negotiating arm for regional councils at the bargaining table with federal and state officials, state associations and partnering organizations
- Communicate a unified voice on federal and state policies and actions affecting regional councils and their member governments
- Develop statewide templates and quality controls for work products, such as CEDS, transportation plans, emergency preparedness plans and GIS data
- Provide forums for professional development training, peer learning and mentoring
- Develop and launch pilot programs to test new ideas and program innovations
- Implement a statewide mechanism to maintain peer accountability

### **State associations also require:**

- Significant time and energy commitments
- Significant commitments to compromise, dialogue and honesty with peers
- Willingness to pursue new opportunities, hold peers accountable and share resources with peers
- Setting realistic expectations of what the state association can accomplish

# State Associations: Ideas for Progress

## 1. Executive directors should meet monthly with a three-part agenda:

- **Conduct pro-active, regular meetings** with key federal, state and local policy officials and staff, partners, funders and constituents about common interests, opportunities and program results.
- **Conduct quality control of statewide regional council programs**, including developing templates for regional plans and programs, making sure assigned tasks were implemented, ensure each regional council is providing a consistent and quality product to funders.
- **Develop and implement a pro-active outreach and relationship building strategy** across the state, including internal problem solving and monitoring to ensure credibility, strategic planning to implement a focused action plan, and a process for exchanging information and intelligence.

## 2. Core Focus Areas for Statewide Associations

- **Outreach and relationship building** with federal elected officials and agencies, state elected officials and agencies, state associations of counties and municipalities, peer statewide associations, foundations and nonprofits, universities and colleges, etc.
- **Program development** including regular statewide association meetings with federal and state partners to explore new opportunities and ideas; focus on statewide accountability, consistency and quality; and constant focus on adding value to federal, state and local programs.
- **Quality control, consistency and performance** across the state; regional councils are viewed by the external world as one service delivery system so it is important to focus on quality, consistency and performance across the state.
- **Peer accountability, mentoring and professional development** to build upon the specific skills and expertise of each regional council. Each regional council tends to have certain strengths, which can benefit other regional councils within the state.
- **Professional development training** for local policy officials, executive directors and professional staff (including finance officers, planners, loan officers, GIS staff, and other related staff).
- **Marketing** through statewide impact reports, newsletters focused on program outcomes, “trading card” (i.e. South Carolina Association of Regional Councils), quarterly issue forums and/or training sessions, and an annual awards program.
- **Annual awards programs** for legislators, volunteers, innovation projects, state and federal agency officials, local policy officials and regional council staff.

**STATEWIDE ASSOCIATION | COMMENTS AND NOTES:**

- **Strengths and Assets:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Opportunities:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Threats:** \_\_\_\_\_

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- **Weaknesses and Challenges:** \_\_\_\_\_

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# NADO SURVEY SUMMARY

## STATE ASSOCIATIONS OF REGIONAL COUNCILS AND REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT ORGANIZATIONS

The National Association of Development Organizations (NADO) conducted a comprehensive review of statewide associations and networks of regional development organizations and regional councils of governments across the country. This research initiative is an important part of NADO's commitment to strengthening the advocacy and organizational capacity of the nation's regional development organizations.

This special report, *State Associations of Regional Councils and Regional Development Organizations: Insights into Organizational Structures, Governance Models and Strategic Initiatives*, is being published at a time when regionalism must experience a national renaissance. With federal domestic programs facing unprecedented budget pressures and state and local governments facing the daunting task of funding and delivering essential public services with fewer resources, regional development organizations have a unique opportunity to offer their expertise and professional services to federal, state and local partners.

### KEY FINDINGS

Just as states vary politically, culturally and geographically, state associations of regional development organizations have a diverse range of missions, programs, budgets and organizational structures. Overall, states covering the Southeast portion of the nation and Texas have the most active and full-service associations. Several states, including a growing number in the Midwest such as Nebraska and Indiana, are striving to revive their state associations after years of dormancy.

The study identified 39 states with statewide associations or formal networks of regional development organizations. States that are completely covered with regional organizations, from border to border, typically have more advanced and financially sound organizations. States with a limited number of regional councils or no regional councils, such as Delaware, Hawaii, Nevada, New Jersey, Rhode Island and Wyoming, have no state group.

Even if the board of the state association is made up of policy and local officials, the success and viability of the organization is directly related to the level of support and participation of the regional organizations' executive directors. Another key factor is whether or not the regional councils in the state receive funding from the legislature or contract with state agencies for specific programs and services, such as planning, GIS, transportation, job training or aging services.

## HIGHLIGHTS AND SHOWCASES OF STATEWIDE INITIATIVES

In reviewing the special initiatives and activities of the various state associations, it became quite apparent that these organizations can be innovative and entrepreneurial and that they have tremendous potential. In Kentucky, the state association has established a statewide GIS association of its members to market and promote their services to businesses, communities and state agencies. The Kentucky group has also partnered with a private sector firm to launch an online auction service for local governments to solicit competitive bids on services, equipment and materials. Both of these innovative activities generate revenue for the state association.

In Pennsylvania, the regional councils (i.e. Local Development Districts) have worked together for years to approach state agencies as a statewide network. As a result, they have been instrumental partners in an innovative enterprise development initiative. Each of the regions serves as technical assistance providers to local businesses on international trade and export development. They set up procurement technical assistance centers to help small and medium-sized companies pursue contracts with federal, state and local agencies. In addition, the Pennsylvania regions are involved in bringing broadband access and information technology to local governments in the Appalachian portion of the state. This effort has brought much needed computer hardware and training to local governments.

The Alabama association has played an instrumental role in several innovative projects. The group successfully passed a statewide ballot initiative to provide \$1 million for each region to create an economic development revolving loan fund. The state group received a federal grant to coordinate and assist local efforts with a scenic byway program. In addition, the members of the Alabama association have leveraged their roles as Area Agencies on Aging to expand attendance at their annual training and professional development conference.

The Illinois association generates revenue from sales of its strategic planning workbook, while the Missouri association hired professional staff to focus on member accountability and marketing. The Mississippi association has become a visible presence in the state and the nation's Capitol, as the group hosts an annual congressional reception and an annual training conference featuring more than 600 attendees. In Georgia and New York, the associations helped the regions secure state funding to assist with the promotion and preparation for the 2000 census.

The Oklahoma state association helped obtain funding for advanced capital improvement planning in each region of the state. The regional development organizations are using their GIS and GPS capacity to create digital maps and extensive databases of the state's public infrastructure. This initiative is helping local governments and the state comply with the GASB 34 accountability standards, in addition to enhancing local economic development planning. Most importantly, each region will have an impressive catalog of data and information for local businesses, communities and local officials to analyze and plan for their futures.



In New York, the state association has created a statewide resource program for regional water quality planning. The network works together to coordinate and implement initiatives related to water resource management and planning. While Oregon's regions have an informal state association, they have developed a joint marketing brochure to promote their statewide network of business development loan funds. The Oregon regions also collaborate to educate and develop relationships with their federal and state legislators and staff.

The South Carolina association has launched a number of innovative programs. The policy members and executive directors in the state crafted a model guide to succession planning for executive directors. In addition, the group developed and published a special report that showcases the impact of the regional councils' programs and initiatives over the years. The impact report has been a useful tool to educate new state elected officials, and even local officials, on the value and services of the regions.

Understanding the growing importance of state government support for regions, the association in Tennessee hosts a luncheon with over 200 people each year to recognize supportive state officials and legislators. The Iowa association also hosts a luncheon at the state capital to outline their priority issues and concerns to state officials. These are just two examples of a growing trend of increased lobbying by regional development organizations at the state level.

In Texas, the regional councils have recently reformed and upgraded their association. The 24 regions in Texas pay substantial dues, and pursue contracts and grants to support a professional and technical staff. By working together as a statewide network, for example, the regions have become key players in coordinating and planning the state's homeland security strategy.

NADO's research also identified an emerging trend with the development of bi-state and multi-state coalitions and partnerships. The regions in Missouri and Iowa, as well as Kentucky and Tennessee, have held joint training and network sessions. The regions in New England, Southeast, West Coast, and more recently, the Southwest region, are forming regional associations or coalitions. For years, the 72 regional development organizations in Appalachia have worked together to build their capacity and skills, and, more recently, the 44 regional councils in the eight-state Mississippi Delta region joined forces with NADO to work together on Delta Authority issues.

## **STATE ASSOCIATION FINANCES**

- There is a great variance in the amount of dues and assessments that state associations collect from members. Dues range from a minimum of \$100 each year per member to cover basic necessities in a number of states to a high of \$41,000 for one regional council in the Texas association.
- The financial resources of an association often determine the state association's level of activity. Eleven of the 14 associations that contract with a government relations firm have annual dues or

assessments of at least \$2000 (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Iowa, Minnesota, Missouri, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee and Vermont).

- Fourteen have paid staff or contract with a member organization or firm for staff support. Of these associations, ten have annual dues or assessments of at least \$1500 (Alabama, Florida, Iowa, Kentucky, Mississippi, Missouri, North Carolina, Oklahoma, Texas and Virginia).
- An increasing number of states (i.e. Georgia, Indiana, New Hampshire, Texas and Virginia) have initiated discussions, or taken recent actions, to increase or adjust dues in order to hire additional staff or contract with a government relations firm for advocacy services.

## **GOVERNANCE MODELS**

- The majority (34) of state associations are formal organizations with established bylaws.
- The governing boards of the state associations typically take on three different forms. (No one form is consistently used more than another. The executive directors of the regional development organizations form the board or governing committee of 18 associations. Local officials and policy board members of the regional organizations serve on the board of ten state associations. Thirteen state associations employ a mixture of both executive directors and policy/elected officials on the board of the statewide association.) In almost all cases where the policy/elected officials make up the board, the executive directors serve as advisors.
- A majority of associations (28) use a committee structure to conduct association activities. While not all of these committees may be permanent, almost all of these associations utilize committees on an “as-needed” basis.

## **ASSOCIATION ACTIVITIES**

- While about half (20) of the associations hold annual training conferences, those that host conferences and professional development workshops indicated the events are one of the most important means of sharing information, educating state and local officials on the work and value of regional organizations, and generating additional revenue for the state association.
- The advocacy and program focus of the state associations vary greatly. The most common issue is state funding for regional planning and technical assistance. An impressive number of associations work on metropolitan and rural transportation planning, aging services, all-hazards mitigation planning, Geographic Information Services (GIS) and workforce development. A select number of

associations are concerned about state funding and program support for solid waste management, housing and business development loan funds. A majority of associations are also currently monitoring or exploring opportunities in homeland security planning and preparedness.

From coast to coast, state associations are evolving into more sophisticated and active organizations as the political and fiscal climates becomes more competitive. Most encouraging is that the executive directors and leadership of the nation's regional development organizations are recognizing the changing environment at the national and state levels, and are taking the steps necessary to remain viable and effective resources for local businesses, communities and governments.

This report and findings represents only a snapshot of the state associations. These organizations are constantly changing and evolving to meet local circumstances, funding and leadership.

**Full report is available under the Resources Section of [NADO.org](https://www.nado.org).**

# TAB G

## Regional Council Snapshots

### Innovations and Noteworthy Practices



# APPENDIX I: REGIONAL COUNCIL INNOVATIONS AND NOTEWORTHY PROGRAMS & PROJECTS

The following list offers a brief snapshot of the diversity of regional council / regional development organization programs and initiatives around the nation. These noteworthy projects and programs are only intended to offer ideas and thoughts on ways regional councils can advance the community and economic competitiveness and goals of their region. *We encourage you to share additional noteworthy practices!*

## ALABAMA

- **Statewide ballot initiative was developed and passed by the Alabama Association of Regional Councils that provided \$1 million for each of the state's twelve regional councils to establish revolving loan funds (RLFs) to assist entrepreneurs and businesses.**
- **Alabama Association of Regional Councils established a pilot program with the state DOT to test the concept of Rural Transportation Planning Organizations (RTPOs) at the West Alabama Regional Council, which already housed and staffed a Metropolitan Planning Organization (MPO);**The pilot was successful, giving the state DOT the confidence to form and house RTPOs statewide within the other regional councils.

## ARIZONA

- **The rural Councils of Governments (COGs) and small urban Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs) in Arizona have collaborated to hire a full-time government relations director to staff the Arizona Rural Transportation Advisory Council.** The coalition sponsors a joint annual transportation summit to enhance the professional development and education for planning staff, elected officials, technical committee members and other rural transportation stakeholders in the state. The advisory council provides a unified voice on regional transportation issues facing small metropolitan and rural areas of the state. The group also provides vital training and technical assistance that helps rural local officials to be more effective and knowledgeable participants in the statewide transportation planning process. (rtac.net)

## FLORIDA

- **South Florida RPC served as a pilot for EDA's Atlanta Regional Office in transferring management of four underperforming RLFs from local governments and a nonprofit to the regional council (which is an Economic Development District);** RLFs are now fully functioning and have grown to \$8.2 million.

- **Southwest Florida RPC has a LEED-certified planner on staff** to assist local governments, industry (including builders) and nonprofit partners with “green” building techniques and planning. With a planner accredited by the U.S. Green Building Council, the RPC has the credibility and knowledge to assist local communities and industry. **Southwest Florida is also one of seven pilot regions in the United States selected to work with Climate Prosperity Project (CCP)** to help generate sustainable urban development. CCP is an economic development partnership that works to promote energy independence, reduce the impacts of climate change, and protect the environment.
- **Northeast Florida Regional Council manages and coordinates the statewide regional emergency preparedness activities** for the state’s eleven regional councils.

## IDAHO

- **Statewide consortium of six economic development districts (EDDs)** received U.S. EPA funding to establish a \$3 million statewide brownfields revolving loan fund to help local businesses and organizations clean up and reuse contaminated properties for economic and community benefit. ([www.idahobrownfields.com](http://www.idahobrownfields.com) | [www.growingidaho.org](http://www.growingidaho.org))
- **Several EDDs in the state played a key leadership role in forming the Idaho Nevada Community Development Financial Institution (CDFI)** for rural Idaho and Nevada in 1999, an important source of capital for businesses and entrepreneurs. Two of the EDD executive directors continue to serve on the Idaho Nevada CDFI board of directors.
- **The East Central Idaho Planning and Development Agency maintains a diverse portfolio of business development finance and micro loan programs**, including SBA, USDA, EDA and locally-based loan funds. To complement these funds, **the group established five entrepreneurship development centers around its region** and also helped create two others to provide the facilities, professional assistance and resources for existing businesses and start-up firms.
- One of East Central’s E Centers is a textbook example of how to build effective regional and multi-sector partnerships that support business development. **The partnership includes the Wasatch Venture Fund, Idaho National Lab, BYU-Idaho University, Eastern Idaho Angels and the other economic development districts across the state.** Each partner brings a special skill set to the table to assist researchers, entrepreneurs and businesses within the region, including deal structuring, tapping into venture and angel investors, writing an effective business plan, conducting market research, and transforming research ideas and products to the private marketplace (commercialization), etc.

## IOWA

- **Three Councils of Governments (who all serve as Rural Transportation Planning Organizations) and one MPO, along with Iowa DOT, joined forces to develop the Trans-Iowa-Illinois Freight Corridor Study in 2007.** The consortium is studying the feasibility of marketing an alternative trucking route to alleviate pressures on the crowded segments of I-80 from Des Moines to I-74 in Western Illinois. This partnership has resulted in greater public participation than the organizations would have achieved alone, as well as enhancing the level of information made available to decision makers at the state and local levels. ([www.seirpc.com](http://www.seirpc.com))

## KENTUCKY

- **Twelve of the state's 15 Area Development Districts (ADDs) provide the management and staff support for regional and local Workforce Investment Boards;** All 15 ADDs serve as Area Agencies on Aging (AAA); 14 of 15 ADDs are EDA Economic Development Districts; All 15 serve as Rural Planning Organizations for transportation planning, as well as five serving as Metropolitan Planning Organizations (MPOs).
- **Under a partnership with Kentucky Infrastructure Authority, all 15 ADDs are involved in implementing and overseeing water and sewer infrastructure projects.** This includes developing and maintaining a database for all water and wastewater utilities located in each ADD service area, collecting information and data, and developing project profiles for all infrastructure projects identified by local utility staff; Each ADD is also charged with ranking project importance and creating a priority list for funding consideration by state legislators and policy officials.
- **Manage various aging and health care services programs,** including Consumer Directed Option (CDO) program through Medicaid, Family Caregiver Support program and Aging Disability Resource Market program.
- **Buffalo Trace ADD launched a GIS Subscription Service for local governments and other partners within the region.** Using GegoSync XG, a GIS viewing software, the ADD provides GIS data to local governments, special districts, water districts, health departments and others. The ADD maintains data layers from each agency, distributes the shared data to all users in each agency and provides the technical support and data maintenance to ensure accuracy among user agencies. This annual subscription allows smaller, rural counties to use GIS for a low-cost fee.
- **Lake Cumberland ADD has partnered with area counties, community and technical college system and South Kentucky Rural Electric Cooperative to build the Kentucky Regional High Growth Training Center** to train current and future electric utility workforce, as well as meet the growing training needs for water, wastewater and telecommunications jobs. With roughly half of the power

industry workforce eligible to retire within the next five to 10 years, this is a high priority issue for the region.

- In an effort to keep young people in local communities, the **Green River Area Development District** hosted the **Extreme Entrepreneurship Tour** for all counties in its region. Over 200 individuals from area high schools and colleges attended this event. The tour brings together the country's top entrepreneurs to share the concept of entrepreneurship at a grassroots level. Local entrepreneurs were incorporated to show that it is possible to stay in one's hometown and be successful. Whether aspiring to start a business or just looking to the future, young people leave inspired to begin the journey of the rest of their lives.

## MAINE

- Governor announced a new statewide initiative, *Mobilize Maine*, as a fresh approach to community and economic development that builds on indigenous strengths and authentic assets of Maine's people, places and businesses. The new asset-based strategic planning project is funded by the state, Fairpoint Communications, state's six Economic Development Districts, local governments and other private and nonprofit sector partners. **Most importantly, the Governor has tapped the state's six EDDs as the primary facilitators and coordinators of the statewide economic development project.**
- **Northern Maine Development Commission serves as an invaluable resource in the northern portion of the state, a very rural and vast region.** The group has several noteworthy designations, including USDA Rural Empowerment Zone, Maine Pine Tree Development Zone, Small Business Development Center, and a Manufacturing Extension Partnership field office. The commission also supports a regional tourism marketing initiative, staffs the Aroostook Partnership for Progress, developed a digital video training program for local officials, developed a regional brownfields initiative ([www.northernmainebrownfields.org](http://www.northernmainebrownfields.org)) and assists in scenic byway corridor management planning. The commission also has extensive community and economic development planning and project management capacity, including EDA, SBA and USDA IRP lending programs.

## MASSACHUSETTS

- **The Pioneer Valley Planning Commission (PVPC) and the Franklin Regional Council of Governments (FRCOG) developed the Pioneer Valley Clean Energy Plan**, under a project funded by the Massachusetts Technology Collaborative. The plan identifies specific actions for stakeholders in the region to take to increase energy conservation, reduce greenhouse gas emissions and develop new sources of clean energy. The two regional planning agencies have been working closely with a regional advisory committee comprised of experts in renewable energy, sustainable development, and planning and have conducted a series of educational sessions involving speakers with expertise



in solar, wind, biomass, and bio-diesel technologies. The plan contains many implementation activities which towns, regional planning agencies, businesses, non-profits, and individuals can undertake to reduce energy consumption, decrease greenhouse gas emissions and to encourage siting of appropriately scaled renewable energy facilities.

- **The Pioneer Valley Regional Commission is leading the Knowledge Corridor Passenger Rail Study,** with support from the Vermont Agency on Transportation. The corridor is the cluster of communities between Springfield, Massachusetts and White River Junction, Vermont located along I-91 within the Connecticut River Valley. The communities consist of a mix of high-density and more rural areas that feature a multitude of important cultural, educational, business and medical facilities. Expansion of passenger rail services along the Knowledge Corridor is viewed as a significant economic revitalization asset.

## MICHIGAN

- **The Northwest Michigan Council of Governments worked with a consortium of community leaders in economic development, education and outreach, energy and local government** to produce a new regional strategy, Renewable Energy, Energy Efficiency and Water Resources: Opportunities for Northwest Lower Michigan. The 3E Initiative is providing a platform for regional economic development planning in the areas of renewable energy and fresh water resources. Economic development organizations, local businesses and chambers of commerce, colleges and training providers, local governments, and workforce development agencies are partners in this initiative. Together, these partners are collaborating to create a regional economic development strategy relevant to Northwest Lower Michigan.

## MINNESOTA

- The **Headwaters Regional Development Commission's Center for Community Stewardship** implemented **Bemidji Leads!** to identify and empower community leaders as stewards working to bring the community together behind a collective vision for Bemidji, and align resources to reach that vision. After one year of listening to community members, Bemidji Leads! stewards challenged the community to step up and move the community forward. As a result, an \$80 million events center is currently under construction; downtown is undergoing revitalization; newly formed Bemidji Day at the Capitol brings over 150 community members to the capitol to lobby for top issues; the Bemidji Education Council was born; and the city and surrounding townships came to an historic joint planning and annexation agreement. Currently, over 400 community members are involved. The stewardship model has now spread from Bemidji to seven other Minnesota communities.

## MISSISSIPPI

- **Three Rivers Planning Development District formed and supports the PUL Alliance, a consortium of three rural counties who agreed to pool their limited resources to build a state-of-the-art mega-industrial site to attract a major automobile manufacturer.** Three counties also agreed to share any tax revenue generated from the site. *(Note: Toyota is now building a facility to manufacture the Prius at the site.)*
- **The members of the Mississippi Association of Planning and Development Districts (MAPDD) and the Mississippi Forestry Commission have partnered to provide a statewide process for preparing Wildfire Prevention Plans and Fire Cause Analysis Plans.** This partnership allows the PDDs with the most at-risk counties to develop statewide forest fire protection plans, with the PDDs using GIS technology to better integrate and enhance data collection and planning processes.

## NEBRASKA

- **The staff of the West Central Nebraska Development District** partnered with area community colleges, business groups and the state to visit more than 1300 businesses to evaluate their needs and conditions. The initiative focused on helping local businesses and entrepreneurs with business transition planning, which is a major issue since 40 percent of local business owners plan to retire or transition out in next five years (without the next generation of workers and owners, many of the businesses will lapse).

## NEW HAMPSHIRE

- The Dartmouth Regional Technology Center is a 32,000 square foot business incubator owned and managed by the Grafton County Economic Development Council and the **North Country Council, an EDA EDD headquartered in** Bethlehem, NH. The center offers education and infrastructure support programs to assist researchers and entrepreneurs in refining business plans, identifying investment resources and providing them with basic business infrastructure and support. The center's current space is already occupied, and a significant backlog exists with demand continuing to grow. To prevent new technology companies from locating out of the region, the North Country Council is already working to double the center's existing lab and work space.
- **The Southwest Regional Planning Commission (NH)** assisted the City of Keene with a new Climate Change Mitigation Plan, which is part of a broader national campaign, *Cities for Climate Protection Campaign (CCP)*, administered by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI).

## NEW MEXICO

- **New Mexico Association of Regional Councils (NewMARC) partnered with New Mexico First and New Mexico DOT to sponsor a three-day statewide town hall, “Sustainable Transportation: Paying Our Way From Here to There.”** The state’s regional councils and the broader coalition are now working with public, private and community partners to implement specific recommendations for making sure the state has the transportation infrastructure and services to compete in the global marketplace.
- **With a pool of \$874,000 in state support each year, the state’s seven regional councils provide technical assistance, planning and capital improvement planning support.** Each regional council assists its local governments and other partners with Infrastructure Capital Improvement Program planning, which is a prerequisite for project funding under the state’s legislative capital outlay fund.
- **The Mid-Region Council of Governments serves as the fiscal agent and manager of the New Mexico Rail Runner Express,** a five-year, \$400 million commuter rail project along the Rio Grande corridor. The project moved from concept and planning to implementation in record time, with MRCOG completing the project in record time and at a far lower cost per mile than any new start transit project in the United States. ([www.mrcog-nm.gov](http://www.mrcog-nm.gov) | [www.nmrailrunner.com](http://www.nmrailrunner.com))

## NEW YORK

- **The Southern Tier West Regional Planning and Development Board led a long-term effort to prevent the abandonment of a 145-mile rail stretch connecting six counties in New York and Pennsylvania.** The group has spearheaded the revitalization of this vital freight rail line by piecing together \$24.9 million in new investments, which has created close to 1,000 new jobs and generated an additional \$4 million in private sector capital from three shipping firms. In 2000, when a new partnership was formed as the Western New York & Pennsylvania (WNYP), the line operations began with only one customer, a manufacturer of specialty ceramics, with only 75 carloads a year. By the end of 2007, WNYP had an even dozen customers and traffic volume was up to almost 55,000 carloads.

## NORTH CAROLINA

- **The Land-of-Sky Regional Council in Asheville manages a Waste Reduction Partners program** that is supported by retiree volunteers with experience in trades such as engineering, science and architecture. Through the program, the experienced volunteers work with local governments, private businesses and nonprofits to identify specific solutions and ideas for reducing energy and water waste. The program has helped reduce energy consumption by over 64,000 megawatt hours and saved over 78 million gallons of water through efficiency projects since 2000.

## OHIO

- **The Mid-Ohio Regional Planning Commission in Columbus has established the Center for Energy and the Environment.** The new research and technical assistance center is focusing on “making green easy” for its 40 local government members. The program focuses on cross-disciplinary issues such as air quality, water quality, sustainable growth planning and clean energy. Staff offer energy assessments to local governments, provide more in-depth data for local leaders and offer educational resources on energy efficiency and clean energy.

## OKLAHOMA

- **The Southwest Oklahoma Impact Coalition received an EDA University Center grant to serve a 20-county region of the state. The organization is governed by the five higher education institutions** (Cameron University, Western Oklahoma State College, Southwestern Oklahoma State University, University of Science and Arts of Oklahoma, and Redlands Community College) **and the two regional councils of governments** (Association of South Central Oklahoma Governments and South West Oklahoma Development Authority) in southwest Oklahoma. The regional economic development consortium is focusing on developing the quantity and quality of its workforce, sector and industry cluster strategies, and addressing key issues such as intermodal transportation, health care, broadband, water quality and quantity, electrical services, and childcare for working families. ([www.soiconline.org](http://www.soiconline.org))

## OREGON

- **The Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc helped establish an angel investor network and venture network within its region.** The Jefferson Grapevine Entrepreneurial and Angel Network was formed in 2007 based on successful entrepreneurship networks in Bend and Portland. The network encompasses four key partners, 12 organizations and hundreds of community leaders. A team of 10-12 local angel investors have been willing to invest equity in aspiring entrepreneurial businesses by financing startup costs. The Southern Oregon Regional Economic Development, Inc. serves as the fiscal agent and administrative support staff for the angel network, along with core partners (Small Business Development Centers, Senior Core of Retired Executives, Rogue Community College and Southern Oregon University). Local businesses also provide sponsorships and support.

## PENNSYLVANIA

- **Seven ARC local development districts** in the state have a broad portfolio of programs and services, including export trade assistance; enterprise development and business development finance; broadband mapping, demand analysis and education; energy audits, analysis and conservation; GIS data and mapping; infrastructure planning and development; government procurement resource centers; and rural transportation planning.
- **Under a state pilot program, the seven LDDs were involved in a program to better integrate and coordinate land use, economic development and transportation planning (LUTED).** Each LDD and their regional and local partners, in collaboration with state officials, were tasked with developing LUTED regional action plans that identify specific short- and long-term strategic priorities.
- **Northwest Commission was instrumental in forming the Northwest Pennsylvania GIS Users Group to share ideas, technical data and resources.** The commission provides a full range of GIS services ranging from data and mapping services to coordinating GIS training to providing on-site technical assistance. It has established a Neighborhood GIS program to allow for increased GIS capacity at the local government level, created a GIS subcommittee for the Northwest Emergency Response Group, and offers fee-based GIS services to area businesses.
- **SEDA COG's Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) gold-rated, new 14,000 sq. ft. Energy Resource Center's High Performance Building is serving as a "living laboratory and classroom,"** encouraging the region's adoption of cost-saving, energy conservation, pollution-preventing best technologies, design and construction practices. The new SEDA COG building is estimated to use at least 40 percent less energy than conventionally-constructed buildings of this size. The building is sited to maximize passive solar gain and its materials and design employ state of the art technologies to minimize energy consumption and pollutants. The site's innovative stormwater management system accommodates zero-discharge of stormwater via bioswales, a vegetated room, porous pavers and other elements. A 75-person conference room and displays within the building are used to educate the public on these features.

## SOUTH CAROLINA

- **The South Carolina Appalachian Council of Governments is a partner in InfoMentum,** a GIS-based tool that supports regional economic development. The partnership, which includes county governments, businesses and utilities throughout the six county Upstate region, has used InfoMentum to provide integrated research tools for business attraction since the mid-1990s. Services provided by InfoMentum include customized GIS applications, an industrial properties database, fact finder database, special reports, technical assistance and InfoMap, a Web-based interactive mapping tool.

## TENNESSEE

- **The Southeast Tennessee Development District, along with the Coosa Valley Regional Development Center and the Northeast Alabama Community College, spearheaded the formation of the Tri-State Regional Workforce Alliance.** With more than 60 partners (including economic development corporations, educational institutions, businesses and philanthropic groups), the alliance takes a regional approach to producing a local, high-skilled workforce that can attract new businesses and retain existing companies and workers. Since its launch in 2006, the alliance has created a Web-based resource ([tristateworkforce.com](http://tristateworkforce.com)), sponsored a regional workforce summit and participated in the U.S. Department of Labor’s National Business Learning Partnership project.

## TEXAS

- **The 24 Councils of Governments in Texas are involved in a variety of noteworthy COG activities.** These include:
  - ✓ Serving as the primary planning and coordinating entities for emergency 9-1-1 communications for most of the state
  - ✓ Partnering with the Governor’s Division of Emergency and Homeland Security to coordinate and improve regional homeland security preparedness, planning and response activities
  - ✓ Texas Association of Regional Councils administers the federal Citizen Corps program in partnership with the state and 24 COGs
  - ✓ COGs in hurricane impacted regions receive direct allocation of HUD Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds from the state
  - ✓ Provide training to law enforcement personnel through regional training academies
  - ✓ Develop and maintain an inventory of municipal solid waste landfills, conduct regional planning activities and maintain regional solid waste management plans
  - ✓ Serve as HHS Area Agencies on Aging, EDA Economic Development Districts and Metropolitan Planning Organizations, as well as provide staff support for Workforce Investment Boards

## VIRGINIA

- **Virginia’s Region 2000 Partnership is a unique regional branding consortium** of the regional planning council, economic development council, technology council and workforce investment board within the greater Lynchburg region. The partnership serves as a single point of contact to the public and private sector for regional planning services, economic development, marketing and workforce development. While each organization within the consortium has its own executive director and staff, the groups share an office complex and administrative services, as well as have cross representation on their governing boards. They also have a regional coordinating council. ([www.region2000.org](http://www.region2000.org))

- **Cumberland Plateau Planning District partnered with Bristol Virginia Utilities to address the shortage of high-speed broadband capacity within its rural region.** With support from EDA and the state’s Tobacco Commission, the groups have extended and developed the region’s fiber-optic backbone by more than 250 miles, including wiring technology and business parks. CPC OptiNet currently serves more than 200 businesses and the group expects to have more than 750 customers by 2010. The CPC OptiNet network consists of two types of architecture: A Passive Optical Network, which is ideal for voice and data to business and residential customers; and Private Ethernet, which is ideal for transparent LAN application and high-bandwidth IP-based services. ([www.cppdc.com](http://www.cppdc.com))

# TAB H

## Peer Resource Exchange

Food for Thought on Key Organizational Issues





# Top Ten Things to Remember: Employee Performance Evaluation Time

By Betty Voights, Executive Director  
Capital Area Council of Governments (TX)

1. The performance evaluation tool should be developed one evaluation cycle prior to when it will be used so employees aren't surprised to learn what they are being evaluated on. Ideally, this tool should be developed in conjunction with review and redevelopment of job descriptions. A uniform approach across the agency based on core competencies for agency goals as well as for each position are an optimal approach.
2. If the agency has key overriding goals like teamwork, cross collaboration, customer service, outreach efforts – these should also be included in core competencies and the evaluation tool.
3. Establish a timeline for annual evaluations and stay with it – every year.
4. Determine in advance if your board has an interest in this process – perhaps they are concerned about turnover, competitiveness of salaries, or other issues which should be considered throughout the year and in conjunction with evaluations.
5. Provide an opportunity for employees to understand the process; don't leave it up to the supervisors to brief them because most of them won't get around to it .
6. Encourage employees to do a self-evaluation using the same tool and to prepare a list of their achievements so they can blow-their-own-horn.
7. Train the supervisors on how to use the evaluation tool.
9. No one should hear about performance issues for the first time in their annual evaluation.
10. Keep track of the good work of staff; don't just remember the problem areas. Keep in mind everybody wants to feel a sense of fulfillment and accomplishment; that's what this process should be about if good morale is a good for your agency.

# CAPITAL AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

## Annual Performance Evaluation

Employee Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Job Title: Director of Emergency Communications

Division: Emergency Communications

State Title and Grade: Director III – B19

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### PART I – INSTRUCTIONS TO RATER

- |                        |                          |
|------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1 - Unacceptable       | 4 – Exceeds Expectations |
| 2 - Needs Improvement  | 5 - Superior             |
| 3 – Meets Expectations |                          |

### PART II – AGENCY COMPETENCIES

**A. Leadership** – motivates and inspires others through communication, cooperation, direction, accountability, optimism, and the routine incorporation of best practices.

- Endeavors to act as a role model for others
- Inspires respect and trust; fosters a culture that has high standard & ethics.
- Reacts well under pressure; maintains focus and intensity, remains optimistic, and recovers quickly from setbacks.
- Takes a long-term view and acts as a catalyst for organizational change building a shared vision and influences others to turn vision into action.
- Holds self and others accountable and can be relied on to complete projects.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Achievement Orientation** – balances competing priorities to meet all program and management objectives in a timely manner

- Fosters team accountability and commitment for reaching project goals.
- Focuses efforts on completing projects and tasks in an efficient and effective manner.
- Demonstrates personal commitment toward achieving successful results.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Concern for Effectiveness** – demonstrates capacity to plan, organize, and carry out short and long-term projects maximizing the impact while considering ramifications of individual and team actions.

- Displays commitment to excellence & applies feedback to improve performance.
- Maps out implementation steps and consults with those impacted by outcome.
- Demonstrates accuracy and thoroughness while improving and promoting quality.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Teamwork** – advocates and encourages collaboration and cooperation between divisions, across the agency, and with other organizations in the region.

- Builds trust with staff and coworkers across boundaries.
- Participates willingly and supports team decisions; part of group taking responsibility for outcomes.
- Shows respect for others; values their contributions, and speaks about others in positive terms.
- Promotes culture of teamwork to balance individual initiative with team accomplishments.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

**E. Communication** – ensures that key issues are addressed and important information is shared quickly and effectively at all levels of the organization.

- Listens attentively and demonstrates sensitivity to others’ perspectives, ideas, and concerns.
- Takes action to help ensure understanding and commitment to ideas and decisions prior to implementation
- Shares information in a clear and concise manner both orally and in writing.
- Acknowledges and addresses problems and issues in an honest, non-judgmental way.
- Understands the need for confidentiality and discretion in some circumstances and limits communications accordingly.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

**F. Customer Service** – consistently demonstrates respect, responsiveness, and professionalism toward others while providing excellent service to internal and external customers.

- Performs duties in a courteous and prompt manner at a level that advances CAPCOG’s reputation for excellence.
- Acknowledges problems or complaints and works to resolve them quickly.
- Displays a positive, helpful attitude when working with internal or external customers.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

### **PART III – POSITION COMPETENCIES**

**A. Decision-making** – demonstrates use of effective decision-making techniques that provide timely, appropriate, and ethical approaches to unresolved issues.

- Displays capacity to utilize appropriate process for making decisions including consulting internal and external colleagues.
- Makes timely decisions and is able to explain rationale for decisions.
- Considers appropriate ethical and legal elements in decision as well as agency goals.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

**B. Judgment** – demonstrates critical thinking based upon in-depth data gathering, corroborating information, considering others’ input, and personal values and ethics.

- Considers input from all appropriate sources and stakeholders.
- Assesses ramifications of actions before making decisions.
- Acts while considering the impression made upon others.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

**C. Accountability** – takes responsibility for division’s activities and performance regardless of circumstances.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

**D. Personnel Management** – provides direction and communicates expectations effectively while motivating staff to meet goals

Score \_\_\_\_\_

**E. Compliance Management** – establishes and maintains systems and procedures to ensure all aspects of budgetary, legal, regulatory, and contractual requirements are met.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

**F. Strategic Thinking** – demonstrates ability to facilitate discussions and take actions to support and expand agency goals and mission.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

**G. Implementation** – performs all baseline job duties including quantity and quality of work.

Score \_\_\_\_\_

**Comments:**

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**Goals:**

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Executive Director Signature                      Date

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Employee Signature                                      Date

## Directors

### CAPITAL AREA COUNCIL OF GOVERNMENTS

#### JOB DESCRIPTION



**Working Title:** Director of Emergency Communications  
**Department:** Emergency Communications Services  
**Reports to:** Executive Director  
**State Classification:** Director III (B19)  
**FLSA Status:**  Exempt  Non-Exempt

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#### GENERAL DESCRIPTION

Responsible for the overall planning, implementation, and monitoring of all aspects of 9-1-1 service delivery for the 10-county CAPCOG region. Performs complex technical and managerial work to provide direction for planning and strategic operations. Work includes strategic planning and evaluations systems, development and review of policies and guidelines, and ongoing knowledge of all technical, statutory, and procedural issues related to emergency 9-1-1 communications. Also responsible for ensuring systems are implemented for contractual, financial, and administrative compliance both internally and externally. Works with extensive latitude for independent judgment and initiative.

#### EXAMPLES OF WORK PERFORMED

- Provides leadership and support to all levels of 9-1-1 program delivery working with elected officials and local government representatives, including technical assistance and policy recommendations
- Plans, develops, and implements annual strategic plan for regional 9-1-1 service delivery with consideration of all recurring and nonrecurring costs over a five-year period, in accordance with all relevant rules, statutes, and policies and with consideration to emerging technologies
- Monitors emergency communications technologies and works closely with organizations and agencies to ensure appropriate 9-1-1 service solutions are planned and implemented
- Develops policies and procedures for the regional 9-1-1 service delivery
- Supervises staff for planning and performance to support all activities and tasks related to implementation of 9-1-1 and other regional communications projects
- Establishes and implements systems to review and monitor all financial and contractual relationships with local governments, providers and carriers, vendors, and other governmental agencies
- Recommends initiatives, strategies, and performance standards based on review of reports, studies, technical data, investigations, research, and training
- Develops and implements performance standards for addressing, database management, public education, mapping, and contract enforcement
- May provide technical support and guidance on communication aspects of homeland security, disaster preparedness, and public safety projects
- Manages administrative functions of Division including personnel, budgeting, reporting, performance goals, contracts, and ensures compliance with relevant regulations, rules, policies, and statutes
- Performs related work as assigned

## GENERAL QUALIFICATIONS

### Education and Experience

- Bachelor's degree from an accredited college or university with major course work in telecommunications, public safety, emergency services, public administration, or a related field
- Minimum five years experience managing emergency communications program with 9-1-1 focus
- Minimum of three years in general administrative management duties in a government agency including work with budget, contracts, procurement, and reporting
- Strong verbal and written communications skills necessary as well as extensive computer skills
- Strong knowledge of state law, rules, and policies preferred
- Working knowledge of wireless issues and Geographical Information Systems required

### Knowledge

- Emergency communications technology with focus on 9-1-1 infrastructure, call delivery functions, and PSAP operations
- Technical aspects of state-of-the-art 9-1-1 technology including wireless and IP
- Management of contracts and procurement practices
- Financing of 9-1-1 services in Texas
- Performance monitoring and measurement
- General trends and best practices in planning for and provision of emergency communications services at a regional level

### Skills and Abilities

- General management functions
- Personnel management and team building
- Coordination and facilitation of multi-organizational initiatives
- Written and oral communications
- Computer software to support division functions
- Coordination of policy, regulatory, and legislative issues

### CAPCOG Core Competencies

- Leadership – Provides direction, motivation, and an example through open communication, optimism, and modeling best practices
- Achievement Orientation – Balances competing priorities to meet all project and team commitments in a timely manner and delivers quality results
- Concern for Effectiveness – Demonstrates a commitment to producing the highest quality work possible, while monitoring long-term impact
- Teamwork - Recognizes independence and talent of each member; fosters a climate of trust, works within the team structure, understands the team perspective, and commits to goal attainment
- Communication – Ensures that key issues are addressed and that important information is shared quickly and effectively up, down, and across the organization
- Customer Service – Consistently demonstrates respect, responsiveness, and professionalism towards others while providing superior service for customers

**Position Specific Competencies**

- **Decision-making** – demonstrates use of effective decision-making techniques that provide timely, appropriate, and ethical approaches to unresolved issues
- **Judgment** – demonstrates critical thinking based upon in-depth data gathering, corroborating information, considering others’ input, and personal values and ethics
- **Accountability** – takes responsibility for division’s activities and performance regardless of circumstances
- **Personnel management** – provides direction and communicates expectations effectively while motivating staff to meet goals
- **Compliance management** – establishes and maintains systems and procedures to ensure all aspects of budgetary, legal, regulatory, and contractual requirements are met
- **Strategic thinking** – demonstrates ability to facilitate discussions and take actions to support and expand agency goals and mission

*I have read and understand all aspects of this job description. I have discussed the duties with my supervisor.*

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Employee Printed Name

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Signature

\_\_\_\_\_  
Date

\_\_\_\_\_  
Supervisor Printed Name

# Top Ten Things to Remember: Indirect Cost Plan

By Richard Cavender, Executive Director  
Meramec RPC (MO) and Staff of Meramec RPC

1. **Indirect costs—What are they?**
  - Overhead Costs
  - Benefit the entire agency
  - Cannot be charged directly to a specific project, grant, etc.
2. **Indirect Cost & Non-Federal funding sources.**
  - What are the implications?
  - Are indirect costs allowable?
3. **Establish an equitable method to distribute indirect costs.**
  - Ensure that the base of distribution is allowable under the OMB circular your organization is regulated by.
    - Percentage of total direct costs
    - Percentage of direct salaries and wages
    - Or another base which results in an equitable distribution.
4. **The policy for equitable distribution needs to be a board approved plan.**
5. **Establish an accounting procedure to record indirect costs.**
6. **Cognizant agency acceptance of indirect cost allocation plan.**
  - How are cognizant agencies determined for indirect costs?
  - Which OMB circular do I follow?
  - Should I enter into a NICRA (negotiated indirect cost rate agreement) with my cognizant agency? When should I re-negotiate?
7. **Budget and support.**
  - How do I budget for indirect costs?
  - How should I report them to the board?
  - What will funding agencies require for support of indirect costs?
8. **Breakout the indirect cost listing** and monitor the costs throughout the year accordingly.
9. **Report these expenses to your governing board timely and have supportive documentation** of those costs should you need to report them to your auditor or funding agencies.
10. **The method used and the accounting software used to distribute the costs should be able to be supported by documentation** as requested by the funding agencies and audit firm contracted with.



# Top Ten Things to Remember: Owning Your Office Building

By Richard Cavender and Staff of the Meramec RPC (MO)  
and Jim Dove, Executive Director of the Northeast Georgia Regional Commission

- 1. Why would you want to own your building versus renting a facility?**
  - Asset versus expense. Assets on the books strengthen the organization sense of financial well being.
  - Owning the asset gives the organization control over improvements, such as for expansion purposes, in at least the timing of the improvements.
  - Organization must be financially strong and have the ability to repay the debt incurred for the purchase or the lease payment.
- 2. There are benefits to set up a leasehold agency versus the regional council owning the building.**
  - The board could be structured in such a way where the local governments could own the building.
  - If you dissolve the organization, once debts are paid, the remaining assets are distributed to the local governments.
  - You have the ability to recoup through lease payments, an eligible charge to federal and state grants, the principal due on debt.
  - You are building equity for your organization. Depreciation, a non-cash outlay, is an eligible charge to federal and state grants and gives the organization the reserves to maintain and make improvements to the building.
- 3. Ideally, your holding corporation or leasehold agency can own other assets for the organization, such as, autos, computers, copiers, furniture and equipment.** Through the lease payment, specifically the recapture of depreciation expense, you have the ability to maintain, repair or replace assets. *HOWEVER, make sure to put in place the proper checks and balances to protect the regional council!*
- 4. The organization could buy or build a building that had excess capacity,** leasing out space and generating an income for the organization.
- 5. Where should I locate and why?**
  - The board needs to come to an agreement as to where they want the building(s) to be located in the region.
- 6. The board would need to consider not only the location of the building.** Size, capacity, parking, access to the region, meeting space, signage, handicap accessibility, proper zoning. Additionally, such hazards as locating in a flood plain would have to be considered as well as would there be a need for satellite offices.
- 7. Maintenance of a building**—as owner of the asset, you are responsible for making improvement, maintenance and repair provisions. Such costs are an expense to the organization and can be charged through lease payments should a leasehold agency own the asset.

**8. How should you account for the asset?**

- Building loan interest is an ineligible charge to federal or state grants per the OMB Circular A-87 Cost Principals for State, Local and Indian Tribal Governments Section 23 (a).
- Local or private dollars could be used to subsidize the interest.

**9. What options do you have regarding method of payment?**

- USDA loans for community facilities
- Conventional lending
- Donated land/building from a local government or private entity
- Federal or state surplus property
- Reserve set aside for purchase price or some portion of it

**10. How should you structure the loan?**

- Semi-monthly payments
- Balloon payments



# GRASSTOPS TIP SHEET

## BUILDING STRONGER RELATIONSHIPS WITH MEMBERS OF CONGRESS AND STAFF

**The number #1 goal for politicians: Get elected.** The #2 goal: Get re-elected. The #3 goal: see #2!

Most national trade and membership associations have a grassroots advocacy program, where they stir up folks from back home to contact lawmakers and their staffs. They try to flood offices with phone calls, letters, faxes and emails - often without knowing their true impact.

The following tip sheet is intended to help NADO members build a stronger relationship with members of Congress and their staff. Ultimately, the goal is to join the elite category of "grasstops advocates." These are key people who have the ear of lawmakers and their top staff. Someone who can get phone calls returned, meetings set up, and follow-up performed on requested actions.

### A. FOCUS ON ESTABLISHING AND MAINTAINING CREDIBILITY

**It can take months or years to establish credibility with your members of Congress.** Even more frustrating is the constant turnover of congressional staff. Some powerful tools for building the confidence and trust of your lawmakers and their staff include:

- **Take the member and their Washington staff on a tour of successful federally-funded projects...**members of the local media can be invited to tag along, if appropriate, or just schedule a low key tour that includes key business leaders and local elected officials. Remember to take pictures and highlight the visit in future newsletters and publications. The follow up work to the visit is just as important as the actual event.
- **Invite the member and their Washington staff to visit your office or attend a board meeting.** During the visit, ask each program director or division leader to give a brief overview of the benefits and impact of their program. If appropriate, invite local customers / clients / beneficiaries to participate in the presentation.

- **Provide timely, factual and concise information.** Make their job easier by providing useful information about potential projects, grant opportunities or local developments. If you are working on a complex issue that requires a six-page brief be sure to attach a one-page executive summary. Keep information concise and double check for accuracy.
- **Ask "independent" constituents to tell your story.** If you helped start up or retain a local business, ask them to send a supportive letter, attend meetings, or offer a testimonial. To be most effective, target local business leaders, state and local elected officials and other local stakeholders.
- **Learn about the member's committee assignments and background** so that you can better gauge their position and influence on issues important to your organization. Lawmakers tend to have more knowledge and control over issues related to their committee assignments.

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***“Take the member of Congress and their Washington staff on a tour of successful federally-funded projects.”***

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## **B. THINK ABOUT THE IMPACT OF DIFFERENT COMMUNICATION TOOLS**

**There are countless methods for communicating with members of Congress.** Some are direct, such as personal meetings and phone calls. Many are indirect, like press coverage or opinion pieces in the local newspaper. All can be potent when properly implemented and timed.

Whatever the medium, it is essential to follow three simple rules: keep it local, keep it personal and keep it concise. Another golden rule is to deliver the message at the appropriate time in the legislative process.

With the advances in technology, most grassroots advocates think they can send off simple email messages and still make a dramatic impact on their senators and representatives. In reality, the most effective ways to influence federal lawmakers remain:

- **A spontaneous letter from a respected constituent.** While NADO may provide a sample letter on an issue, be sure to always adapt the letter to local circumstances and to incorporate examples into the letter that demonstrate the value or impact of the federal action.
- **Telephone calls from an informed constituent.** Be sure to ask for the staff member who handles the specific issue. Have the bill number and/or amendment name and number. Ask for a written response to your request. Write out a one-sentence explanation of the issue and request before picking up the phone. Always leave a detailed message.

- **Articles and editorials in major daily and weekly newspapers.** Members of Congress recognize that constituents who read the opinion sections of newspapers also tend to vote. They are also aware that newspaper articles and editorials play a major role in shaping public opinion.
- **Visits from constituents.** Face-to-face meetings offer the best opportunity to explain issues in detail and receive feedback or advice. By its very nature, it is a proven tactic for ensuring that the lawmaker hears personally about the issue. When using techniques such as letters and emails there is less certainty that the lawmaker ever knows about your request.

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## SPECIAL NOTE ON EMAIL COMMUNICATIONS

Since the Anthrax incident, Congress and federal agencies have implemented new safety precautions with the delivery of mail. It can now take up to two weeks for a letter to arrive in a congressional office. However, before you make the switch to email remember several points.

**The average Senate office receives about 50,000 emails per month, according to the Washington Post. The average House office receives about 8,000 per month.** If you can generate thousands of legitimate messages from local constituents on an issue, email may be an appropriate approach. Otherwise, consider sending a fax, picking up the phone and calling directly, or set up a personal visit. By only sending an email, you'll most likely be lost in cyberspace!

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***“By only sending an email, you'll most likely be lost in cyberspace!”***

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### C. KNOW THE DIFFERENT ROLES OF CONGRESSIONAL STAFF

Staff members serve as the gatekeepers, whether it is the chief of staff, scheduler or receptionist. They are also the "eyes and ears" for their boss. Some golden rules to remember are:

- The staff who serve as caseworkers and legislative correspondents today are tomorrow's legislative directors or chiefs of staff.
- If the member is not available for a meeting, always meet with staff.
- Always send a thank you note after a meeting or phone call. Staff remember those who take time to express their appreciation. It also gives you another opportunity to restate your case.

**The following are brief descriptions of the different congressional staff:**

- **Chief of Staff or Administrative Assistant** - Person reports directly to the member of Congress, is typically more political and in charge of office operations and assignments. The title of Administrative Assistant is often misleading. On Capitol Hill, these are the power players.
- **Legislative Director and Legislative Assistant** - Monitors the legislative schedule, coordinates activities of legislative staff and works on specific issues. Advises lawmaker on floor votes, committee action and pending legislation.
- **District Staff** - Eyes and ears back home. Help with casework and constituent services, including projects.
- **Committee Staff** - Professional staff who are experts on specific issues. Traditionally report and work for the chairman or ranking minority member. Very influential in the crafting of legislation, development of hearings and oversight of federal programs.

## **D. RECOGNITION, RECOGNITION, RECOGNITION**

The most common mistake of professional lobbyists and grassroots advocates alike is they forget to say thank you. When a member of Congress cosponsors an important bill, send a thank you note. If a lawmaker signs a dear colleague letter, write a brief note of appreciation. If a member votes your way in committee or on the floor, thank them. Another tip is to recognize staff members who have been helpful!

Besides writing a letter, recognize supportive lawmakers at banquets, board meetings, public forums and newsletters. Don't just give them a plaque. Instead make it something special that relates to the issue and is personal, such as a framed picture, sculpture or figurine.

In conclusion, it is important to remember that the work of a grassroots advocate or grassroots leader is never complete! There is constant turnover in congressional membership and staff, ever changing shifts in political power, and frequent advances in communication technologies. The policymaking process is slow, deliberate and, often times, frustrating with many highs and lows. If you stay active, committed and organized, you'll come out on top in the end.

### **ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:**

*All Politics Is Local: NADO Guide to Grassroots Action*

Available online under the Legislative Affairs and Publications Sections of [NADO.org](http://NADO.org)

# Top 15 Ways for Improving and Maintaining Your Regional Council Website

By Arefa Vohra, NADO Graduate Fellow

1. **Do not clutter your RDO's homepage-** only include the most pertinent information like general contact information, recent updates/news, upcoming events, few pictures of your region/members, and links and/or tabs to the rest of the Web site's pages.
2. **Make sure that your RDO's full contact information is on your Web site's homepage-** this includes: street and number, city, state, zip code, general phone number, fax number and/or a general e-mail address; make sure the font size and type are clear so that it is easily visible to the visitor; it is also a good idea to have the full contact information in the footer on every page.
3. **Provide full information on staff contacts-** this includes full staff name, position title, e-mail address and a direct line/extension if applicable.
4. **Clearly distinguish various program areas** in separate sections (Web pages) on your Web site, but be as simplistic as possible by providing only the most pertinent information; Web sites with too many links and tabs with a lot of text can be overwhelming to a visitor.
5. **Do not create Web pages with lengthy text-** you will lose the visitor because studies show that they look at top and left sections of a Web site so avoid wide and long text; if you have a lot of content on a particular topic then divide it up into sub-Web pages on that same page.
6. **Keep your Web site format as consistent as possible-** use the same or similar design for all Web pages on your Web site; try to maintain the same font type and **do not** change the sizes of fonts dramatically (i.e. it is o.k. for the title of Web pages to have a bit larger font than the font of the Web page text).
7. **Make sure that all your Web links on your Web site work-** a fast way to check problems with Web links is to look at your Web site's error log, typically found in the admin section, so that you can quickly fix these problems; in the alternative, check Web links on every Web page and every tab to ensure that they work properly; if not, then tag the link or tab as under construction until it can get fixed.
8. **Provide documentation/materials on your Web site-** in addition to text on your Web site, it is important that an RDO provide the public with valuable information about who they are and what they do (i.e. brochures, publications, CEDs documents, issue specific analyses, and/or newsletters/media articles about the RDO).

9. **Categorize information appropriately-** it is important that a visitor knows where to go for information so organize the content of your Web site well (i.e. staff contact information can be found in “about us” or “contact us” tab, not “senior core program” tab).
10. **Update your Web site frequently-** it is very crucial that your Web site is updated frequently so that visitors receive the most current information (i.e. weekly newsletters, new staff information, recent legislation, or a change in address of your RDO). Be sure to date your information so visitors know the date of the posting.
11. **Create a visually appealing colorful Web site-** in addition to Web site structure, format, and font type, color is a key factor in making or breaking your Web site; choose colors that create an inviting and pleasant appeal to visitors; be sure to make a high color contrast between the Web site background and text (i.e. tan background with black text); also **do not** use text color that is distracting for the visitor (i.e. red text).
12. **Do not repeat information unnecessarily-** be careful of repeating content on your Web site because you could be wasting valuable space where other information could go; it is o.k. to repeat contact info (i.e. RDO phone number repeated twice in different sections of the Web site) versus an unnecessary repetition of information (i.e. description of transportation program in several sections of the Web site); this can also be time consuming for staff who may need to update this information in several sections of the Web site.
13. **Solicit feedback on Web site from RDO members and/or other audience-** it is very beneficial for organizations to engage their audience and ask for feedback/suggestions regarding proposed changes to an existing Web site as well as comments on an improved Web site; surveys can be done in a variety of ways: via e-mail, via phone, via in-person meetings, or through a survey program like [Survey Monkey \(www.surveymonkey.com\)](http://www.surveymonkey.com).
14. **Uploading/Downloading information properly-** it is important that documents on a Web site are accessible to users so make sure that programs that are used to create documents are available on the Web site for users to download (i.e. Adobe Reader for PDFs; Microsoft Word Viewer, Excel Viewer, and PowerPoint Viewer for MS Office files); if a Web site is constructed with federal funds, it is a requirement that these programs are made available; also make sure documents are labeled properly (i.e. PDF doc) and accessible (Web links are clearly distinguishable on Web page).
15. **Seek advice from others RDOs on Web site best practices/success models-** every RDO is at a different level in terms of their tech ability and access, but there are plenty of excellent RDO Web sites that can provide a model to follow (*See following page for samples*).



## Sample Regional Council Web sites

Central Massachusetts Regional Planning Commission	<a href="http://www.cmrpc.org/">www.cmrpc.org/</a>
Central New York Regional Planning and Development Board	<a href="http://www.cnyrpdb.org/">www.cnyrpdb.org/</a>
East Central Intergovernmental Association	<a href="http://www.ecia.org/">www.ecia.org/</a>
Merrimack Valley Planning Commission	<a href="http://www.mvpc.org/">www.mvpc.org/</a>
Mid-Carolina Council of Governments	<a href="http://www.mccog.org/">www.mccog.org/</a>
Northwest Michigan Council of Governments	<a href="http://www.nwm.org/">www.nwm.org/</a>
Northwest Piedmont Council of Governments	<a href="http://www.nwpcog.org/">www.nwpcog.org/</a>
Region Nine Development Commission	<a href="http://www.rndc.org/">www.rndc.org/</a>
South Central Alabama Development Commission	<a href="http://www.scadc.state.al.us/">www.scadc.state.al.us/</a>
The Association of Central Oklahoma Governments	<a href="http://www.acogok.org/">www.acogok.org/</a>
Triangle J Council of Governments	<a href="http://www.tjcog.dst.nc.us/">www.tjcog.dst.nc.us/</a>

# TAB I

## Concepts of Leadership



# Concepts of Leadership: Accolades

Source: A Big Dog, Little Dog and Knowledge Jump Production. ([www.nwlink.com/~donclark](http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark))

Contact: Don Clark ([donclark@nwlink.com](mailto:donclark@nwlink.com))



**I used to think that running an organization was equivalent to conducting a symphony orchestra. But I don't think that's quite it; it's more like jazz.**

**There is more improvisation.**

**- Warren Bennis**

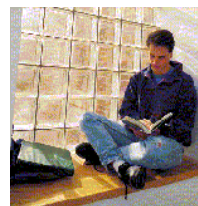
Good leaders are **made** not born. If you have the desire and willpower, you can become an effective leader. Good leaders develop through a never ending process of self-study, education, training, and experience. This guide will help you through that process.

To inspire your workers into higher levels of teamwork, there are certain things you must **be, know, and, do**. These do not come naturally, but are acquired through continual work and study. Good leaders are continually working and studying to improve their leadership skills; they are NOT resting on their laurels.



***The meaning of a message is the change which it produces in the image.***

**- Kenneth Boulding in *The Image: Knowledge in Life and Society***



objective and directs the organization in a way that makes it more cohesive and coherent.

Leaders carry out this process by applying their leadership attributes, such as beliefs, values,

ethics, character, knowledge, and skills. Although your position as a manager, supervisor, lead, etc. gives you the authority to accomplish certain tasks and objectives in the organization, this *power* does not make you a leader, it simply makes you the *boss*. Leadership differs in that it makes the followers *want* to achieve high goals, rather than simply *bossing people around*.



Bass' (1989 & 1990)

theory of leadership states that there are three basic ways to explain how people become leaders. The first two explain the leadership development

#### Human Relations

- The six most important words: "I admit I made a mistake." - Author unknown
- The five most important words: "You did a good job."
- The four most important words: "What is your opinion."
- The three most important words: "If you please."
- The two most important words: "Thank you,"
- The one most important word: "We"
- The least important word: "I"

for a small number of people. These theories are:

- Some personality traits may lead people naturally into leadership roles. *This is the Trait Theory.*
- A crisis or important event may cause a person to rise to the occasion, which brings out extraordinary leadership qualities in an ordinary person. *This is the Great Events Theory.*
- People can choose to become leaders. People can learn leadership skills. *This is the Transformational Leadership Theory.* It is the most widely accepted theory today and the premise on which this guide is based.

When a person is deciding if she respects you as a leader, she does not think about your attributes, rather, she observes what you *do* so that she can know who you really *are*. She uses this observation to tell if you are an honorable and trusted leader or a self-serving person who misuses authority to look good and get promoted. Self-serving leaders are not as effective because their employees only obey them, not follow them. They succeed in many areas because they present a good image to their seniors at the expense of their workers.

The basis of good leadership is honorable character and selfless service to your organization. In your employees' eyes, your leadership is everything you do that effects the organization's objectives and their well-being. Respected leaders concentrate on what they *are [be]* (such as beliefs and character), what they *know* (such as job, tasks, and human nature), and what they *do* (such as implementing, [motivating](#), and providing [direction](#)).

What makes a person want to follow a leader? People want to be guided by those they respect and who have a clear sense of direction. To gain respect, they must be ethical. A sense of direction is achieved by conveying a strong vision of the future.

## The Two Most Important Keys to Effective Leadership

According to a study by the Hay Group, a global management consultancy, there are 75 key components of employee satisfaction (Lamb, McKee, 2004). They found that:

- **Trust and confidence** in top leadership was the single most reliable predictor of employee satisfaction in an organization.
- **Effective communication by leadership** in three critical areas was the key to winning organizational trust and confidence:
  1. Helping employees understand the company's overall business strategy.
  2. Helping employees understand how they contribute to achieving key business objectives.
  3. Sharing information with employees on both how the company is doing and how an employee's own division is doing - relative to strategic business objectives.

So in a nutshell -- you must be **trustworthy** and you have to be able to **communicate a vision** of where the organization needs to go. The next section, "Principles of Leadership", ties in closely with this key concept.

## Principles of Leadership

To help you *be, know, and do*; ([U.S. Army, 1973](#)) follow these eleven principles of leadership (later chapters in this guide expand on these and provide tools for implementing them):

1. **Know yourself and seek self-improvement** - In order to know yourself, you have to understand your *be, know, and do*, attributes. Seeking self-improvement means continually strengthening your attributes. This can be accomplished through self-study, formal classes, reflection, and interacting with others.
2. **Be technically proficient** - As a leader, you must know your job and have a solid familiarity with your employees' tasks.

3. **Seek responsibility and take responsibility for your actions** - Search for ways to guide your organization to new heights. And when things go wrong, they always do sooner or later -- do not blame others. Analyze the situation, take corrective action, and move on to the next challenge.
4. **Make sound and timely decisions** - Use good problem solving, decision making, and planning tools.
5. **Set the example** - Be a good role model for your employees. They must not only hear what they are expected to do, but also see. *We must become the change we want to see* - Mahatma Gandhi.
6. **Know your people and look out for their well-being** - Know human nature and the importance of sincerely caring for your workers.
7. **Keep your workers informed** - Know how to communicate with not only them, but also seniors and other key people.
8. **Develop a sense of responsibility in your workers** - Help to develop good character traits that will help them carry out their professional responsibilities.
9. **Ensure that tasks are understood, supervised, and accomplished** - Communication is the key to this responsibility.
10. **Train as a team** - Although many so called leaders call their organization, department, section, etc. a team; they are not really teams...they are just a group of people doing their jobs.
11. **Use the full capabilities of your organization** - By developing a team spirit, you will be able to employ your organization, department, section, etc. to its fullest capabilities.

## Factors of leadership

There are four major factors in leadership:

### **Follower**

Different people require different styles of leadership. For example, a new hire requires more supervision than an experienced employee.

A person who lacks motivation requires a different approach than one with a high degree of motivation. You must know your people! The fundamental starting point is having a good understanding of human nature, such as needs, emotions, and motivation. You must come to know your employees' *be*, *know*, and *do* attributes.

### **Leader**

You must have an honest understanding of who you are, what you know, and what you can do. Also, note that it is the followers, not the leader who determines if a leader is successful. If they do not trust or lack confidence in their leader, then they will be uninspired. To be successful you have to convince your followers, not yourself or your superiors, that you are worthy of being followed.

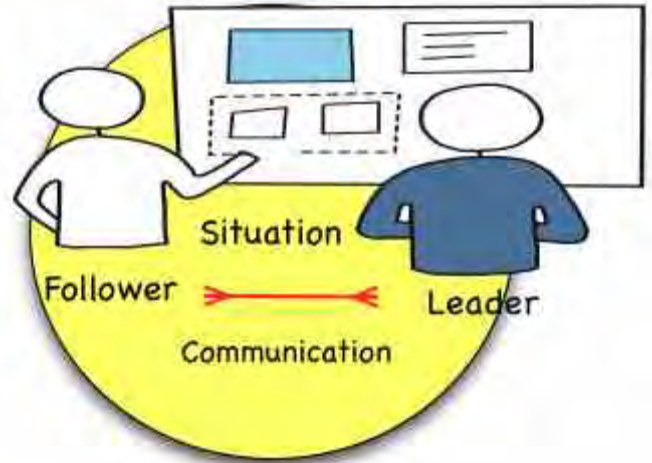
### **Communication**

You lead through two-way communication. Much of it is nonverbal. For instance, when you "set the example," that communicates to your people that you would not ask them to perform anything that you would not be willing to do. What and how you communicate either builds or harms the relationship between you and your employees.

### **Situation**

All are different. What you do in one situation will not always work in another. You must use your judgment to decide the best course of action and the leadership style needed for each situation. For example, you may need to confront an employee for inappropriate behavior, but if the confrontation is too late or too early, too harsh or too weak, then the results may prove ineffective.

Various forces will affect these factors. Examples of forces are your relationship with your seniors, the skill of your people, the informal leaders within your organization, and how your company is organized.



## Attributes

If you are a leader who can be trusted, then those around you will grow to respect you. To be such a leader, there is a **Leadership Framework** to guide you:

### *BE KNOW DO*

**BE** a professional.

Examples: Be loyal to the organization, perform selfless service, take personal responsibility.

**BE** a professional who possess good character traits.

Examples: Honesty, competence, candor, commitment, integrity, courage, straightforwardness, imagination.

**KNOW** the four factors of leadership - follower, leader, communication, situation.

**KNOW** yourself.

Examples: strengths and weakness of your character, knowledge, and skills.

**KNOW** human nature.

Examples: Human needs, emotions, and how people respond to stress.

**KNOW** your job.

Examples: be proficient and be able to train others in their tasks.

**KNOW** your organization.

Examples: where to go for help, its climate and culture, who the unofficial leaders are.

**DO** provide direction.

Examples: goal setting, problem solving, decision making, planning.

**DO** implement.

Examples: communicating, coordinating, supervising, evaluating.

**DO** motivate.

Examples: develop morale and *esprit de corps* in the organization, train, coach, counsel.



## Environment

Every organization has a particular work environment, which dictates to a considerable degree how its leaders respond to problems and opportunities. This is brought about by its heritage of past leaders and its present leaders.

## Goals, Values, and Concepts

Leaders exert influence on the **environment** via three types of actions:

1. The **goals** and performance standards they establish.
2. The **values** they establish for the organization.
3. The business and people **concepts** they establish.

Successful organizations have leaders who set high standards and **goals** across the entire spectrum, such as strategies, market leadership, plans, meetings and presentations, productivity, quality, and reliability.

**Values** reflect the concern the organization has for its employees, customers, investors, vendors, and surrounding community. These values define the manner in how business will be conducted.

**Concepts** define what products or services the organization will offer and the methods and processes for conducting business.

These goals, values, and concepts make up the organization's "personality" or how the organization is observed by both outsiders and insiders. This personality defines the roles, relationships, rewards, and rites that take place.

## Roles and Relationships

Roles are the positions that are defined by a set of expectations about behavior of any job incumbent. Each role has a set of tasks and responsibilities that may or may not be spelled out. Roles have a powerful effect on behavior for several reasons, to include money being paid for the performance of the role, there is prestige attached to a role, and a sense of accomplishment or challenge.

Relationships are determined by a role's tasks. While some tasks are performed alone, most are carried out in relationship with others. The tasks will determine who the role-holder is required to interact with, how often, and towards what end. Also, normally the greater the interaction, the greater the

liking. This in turn leads to more frequent interaction. In human behavior, it's hard to like someone whom we have no contact with, and we tend to seek out those we like. People tend to do what they are rewarded for, and friendship is a powerful reward. Many tasks and behaviors that are associated with a role are brought about by these relationships. That is, new task and behaviors are expected of the present role-holder because a strong relationship was developed in the past, either by that role-holder or a prior role-holder.

## Culture and Climate

There are two distinct forces that dictate how to act within an organization: **culture and climate**.

Each organization has its own distinctive culture. It is a combination of the founders, past leadership, current leadership, crises, events, history, and size. This results in *rites*: the routines, rituals, and the "way we do things." These rites impact individual behavior on what it takes to be in good standing (the norm) and directs the appropriate behavior for each circumstance.

The climate is the feel of the organization, the individual and shared perceptions and attitudes of the organization's members. While the culture is the deeply rooted nature of the organization that is a result of long-held formal and informal systems, rules, traditions, and customs; climate is a short-term phenomenon created by the current leadership. Climate represents the beliefs about the "feel of the organization" by its members. This individual perception of the "feel of the organization" comes from what the people believe about the activities that occur in the organization. These activities influence both individual and team motivation and satisfaction, such as:

- How well does the leader clarify the priorities and goals of the organization?
- What is expected of us?
- What is the system of recognition, rewards, and punishments in the organization?
- How competent are the leaders?
- Are leaders free to make decisions?
- What will happen if I make a mistake?

Organizational climate is directly related to the leadership and management style of the leader, based on the values, attributes, skills, and actions, as well as the priorities of the leader. Compare this to "ethical climate" -- the "feel of the organization" about the activities that have ethical content or those

aspects of the work environment that constitute ethical behavior. The ethical climate is the feel about whether we do things right; or the feel of whether we behave the way we ought to behave. The behavior (character) of the leader is the most important factor that impacts the climate.

On the other hand, culture is a long-term, complex phenomenon. Culture represents the shared expectations and self-image of the organization. The mature values that create "tradition" or the "way we do things here." Things are done differently in every organization. The collective vision and common folklore that define the institution are a reflection of culture. Individual leaders, cannot easily create or change culture because culture is a part of the organization. Culture influences the characteristics of the climate by its effect on the actions and thought processes of the leader. But, everything you do as a leader will affect the climate of the organization.

For an activity, see [Culture and Climate](http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/culture.html). (www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/culture.html)

For information on culture, see [Long-Term Short-Term Orientation](http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leadcon.html).  
(www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/leadcon.html)

## Leadership Models

Leadership models help us to understand what makes leaders act the way they do. The ideal is not to lock yourself in to a type of behavior discussed in the model, but to realize that every situation calls for a different approach or behavior to be taken. Two models will be discussed, the *Four Framework Approach* and the *Managerial Grid*.

### Four Framework Approach

In the *Four Framework Approach*, Bolman and Deal (1991) suggest that leaders display leadership behaviors in one of four types of frameworks: Structural, Human Resource, Political, or Symbolic. The style can either be effective or ineffective, depending upon the chosen behavior in certain situations.

#### Structural Framework

In an effective leadership situation, the leader is a social architect whose leadership style is analysis and design. While in an ineffective leadership situation, the leader is a petty tyrant whose leadership style is details. Structural Leaders focus on structure, strategy, environment, implementation, experimentation, and adaptation.

#### Human Resource Framework

In an effective leadership situation, the leader is a catalyst and servant whose leadership style is support, advocacy, and empowerment. While in an ineffective leadership situation, the leader is a pushover, whose leadership style is abdication and fraud. Human Resource Leaders believe in people and communicate that belief; they are visible and accessible; they empower, increase participation, support, share information, and move decision making down into the organization.

#### Political Framework

In an effective leadership situation, the leader is an advocate, whose leadership style is coalition and building. While in an ineffective leadership situation, the leader is a hustler, whose leadership style is manipulation. Political leaders clarify what they want and what they can get; they assess the distribution of power and interests; they build linkages to other stakeholders, use persuasion first, then use negotiation and coercion only if necessary.

## Symbolic Framework

In an effective leadership situation, the leader is a prophet, whose leadership style is inspiration. While in an ineffective leadership situation, the leader is a fanatic or fool, whose leadership style is smoke and mirrors. Symbolic leaders view organizations as a stage or theater to play certain roles and give impressions; these leaders use symbols to capture attention; they try to frame experience by providing plausible interpretations of experiences; they discover and communicate a vision.

This model suggests that leaders can be put into one of these four categories and there are times when one approach is appropriate and times when it would not be. Any one of these approaches alone would be inadequate, thus we should strive to be conscious of all four approaches, and not just rely on one or two. For example, during a major organization change, a structural leadership style may be more effective than a visionary leadership style; while during a period when strong growth is needed, the visionary approach may be better. We also need to understand ourselves as each of us tends to have a preferred approach. We need to be conscious of this at all times and be aware of the limitations of our favoring just one approach.

For an activity, see Bolman and [Deal's Four Framework Approach](#).

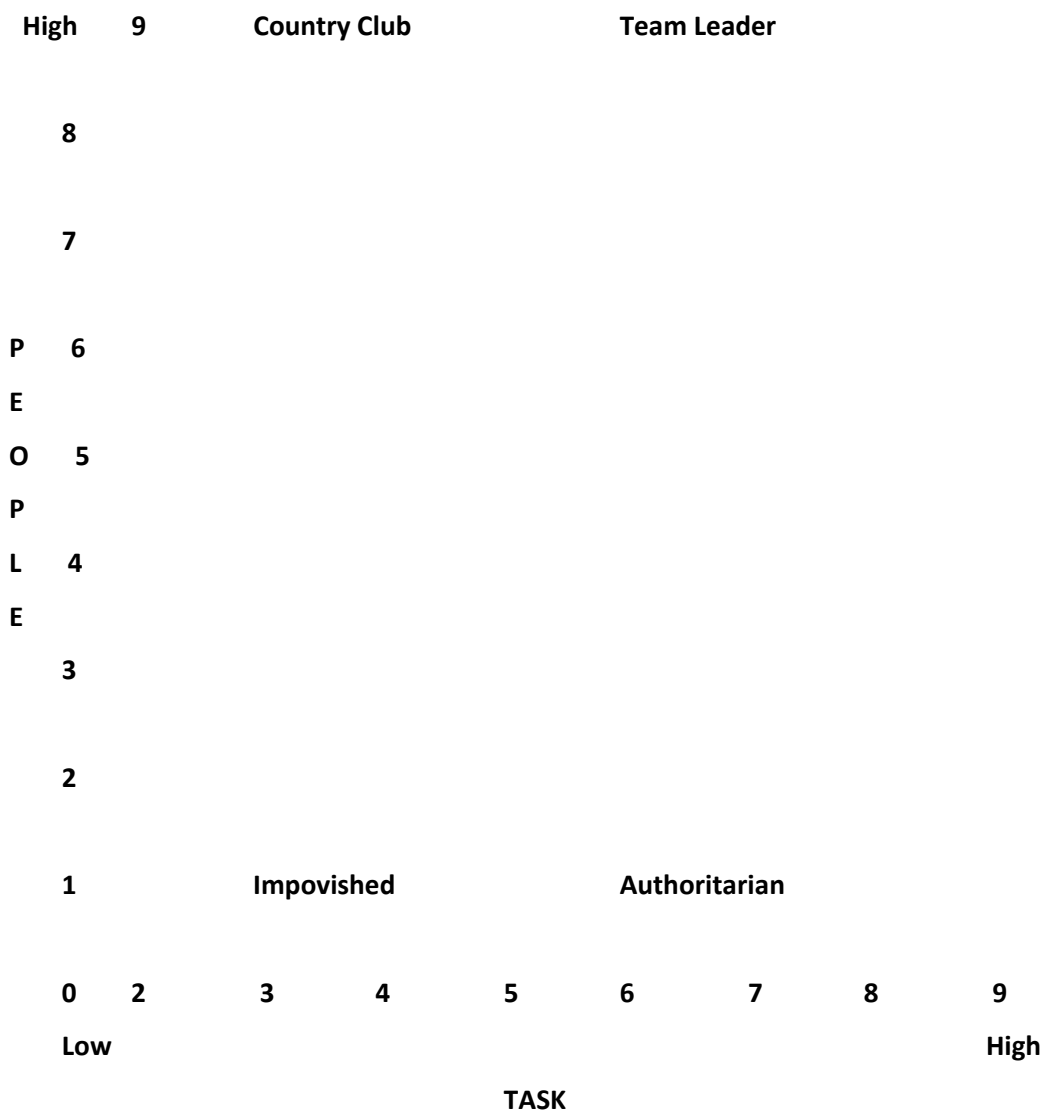
([www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/framework.html](http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/framework.html))

# Managerial Grid

The Blake and Mouton *Managerial Grid* (1985) uses two axes:

1. "Concern for people" is plotted using the vertical axis
2. "Concern for task" is along the horizontal axis.

They both have a range of 0 to 9. The notion that just two dimensions can describe a managerial behavior has the attraction of simplicity. These two dimensions can be drawn as a graph or grid:



Most people fall somewhere near the middle of the two axes. But, by going to the extremes, that is, people who score on the far end of the scales, we come up with four types of leaders:

- **Authoritarian** (9 on task, 1 on people)
- **Team Leader** (9 on task, 9 on people)
- **Country Club** (1 on task, 9 on people)
- **Impoverished** (1 on task, 1 on people).

### **Authoritarian Leader** (high task, low relationship)

People who get this rating are very much task oriented and are hard on their workers (autocratic). There is little or no allowance for cooperation or collaboration. Heavily task oriented people display these characteristics: they are very strong on schedules; they expect people to do what they are told without question or debate; when something goes wrong they tend to focus on who is to blame rather than concentrate on exactly what is wrong and how to prevent it; they are intolerant of what they see as dissent (it may just be someone's creativity), so it is difficult for their subordinates to contribute or develop.

### **Team Leader** (high task, high relationship)

This type of person leads by positive example and endeavors to foster a team environment in which all team members can reach their highest potential, both as team members and as people. They encourage the team to reach team goals as effectively as possible, while also working tirelessly to strengthen the bonds among the various members. They normally form and lead some of the most productive teams.

### **Country Club Leader** (low task, high relationship)

This person uses predominantly reward power to maintain discipline and to encourage the team to accomplish its goals. Conversely, they are almost incapable of employing the more punitive coercive and legitimate powers. This inability results from fear that using such powers could jeopardize relationships with the other team members.

## **Impoverished Leader** (low task, low relationship)

A leader who uses a "delegate and disappear" management style. Since they are not committed to either task accomplishment or maintenance; they essentially allow their team to do whatever it wishes and prefer to detach themselves from the team process by allowing the team to suffer from a series of power struggles.

The most desirable place for a leader to be along the two axes at most times would be a 9 on task and a 9 on people -- the Team Leader. However, do not entirely dismiss the other three. Certain situations might call for one of the other three to be used at times. For example, by playing the Impoverished Leader, you allow your team to gain self-reliance. Be an Authoritarian Leader to instill a sense of discipline in an unmotivated worker. By carefully studying the situation and the forces affecting it, you will know at what points along the axes you need to be in order to achieve the desired result.

For an activity, see The [Leadership Matrix](http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/matrix.html).  
([www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/matrix.html](http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/leader/matrix.html))

## **The Process of Great Leadership**

The road to great leadership ([Kouzes & Posner, 1987](#)) that is common to successful leaders:

- **Challenge the process** - First, find a process that you believe needs to be improved the most.
- **Inspire a shared vision** - Next, share your vision in words that can be understood by your followers.
- **Enable others to act** - Give them the tools and methods to solve the problem.
- **Model the way** - When the process gets tough, get your hands dirty. A boss tells others what to do, a leader shows that it can be done.
- **Encourage the heart** - Share the glory with your followers' hearts, while keeping the pains within your own.



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# Concepts of Leadership: Accolades

Source: A Big Dog, Little Dog and Knowledge Jump Production. ([www.nwlink.com/~donclark](http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark))

Contact: [donclark@nwlink.com](mailto:donclark@nwlink.com)

- [The Training Journal](http://www.trainingjournal.com/) - One of the very few worthwhile sites. ([www.trainingjournal.com/](http://www.trainingjournal.com/))
- [TrainingZONE](http://www.trainingzone.co.uk/item/10676) - Jan 4, 2000 - "[The Time Capsule page](#) provides a wonderful summary of key ideas, players, concepts, developments and breakthroughs from throughout history in the evolution of training and development approaches. . . My only reservation is that once you start exploring the page, you'll be tempted to stay for hours!" ([www.trainingzone.co.uk/item/10676](http://www.trainingzone.co.uk/item/10676))
- *Performance Improvement Journal* "World Wide Web Sites for Instructional Design and Human Performance" (International Society for Performance Improvement - NSPI) January 1999 - "One of the largest sites related to training and development"
- [ASTD's](#) Surf Site of the Week for May 4, 1998
- *The 1997 ASTD Training and Performance Yearbook*, page 501. Three stars (their highest rating)
- [Training Supersite](http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd.html). An A+ training site ([www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd.html](http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd.html))
- *Training Magazine*, April 1996, 101, Web Surfing. The World Wide Web at its best ([www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd.html](http://www.nwlink.com/~donclark/hrd.html))

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