

Your Chamber of Commerce

Succession Plan

For

President/CEO

Memorandum

Date:

To: Board of Directors

From: President/CEO

Subject: Succession Plan for President/CEO

The following is a guide to succession for the office of President/CEO of YOUR CHAMBER. This guide is designed for use in the instance of a sudden, unplanned vacancy or the resignation of the current President/CEO and is intended to ensure the continued operation of YOUR CHAMBER with minimal disruption.

- **Internal Candidates**

YOUR CHAMBER employees should also be encouraged by the Board to submit their names for consideration if interested. These names will be submitted to the search committee to be included in the selection process.

- **Plan Execution**

The Board President will call a special meeting of the Board of Directors, **within 2 weeks of notification of the vacancy**, to discuss the succession plan and begin the process. Major activities will include:

- Board of Directors prepares a budget for and appoints a search committee
- If a search firm is to be used, the search committee will prepare and send Request for Proposals to search firms (**1-week process**)
- If an internal search is selected, a coordinator is selected from the committee
- The search committee receives responses from the search firms, interviews as necessary, and selects a firm (**up to 2-week process**)
- The search firm recommends the top four candidates to be interviewed by search committee (**up to 1-month process**)
- Search committee interviews candidates (**2-week process**)
- Decision and offer process (**2-week process**). *Recommend legal counsel review*

- **Succession Group**

The Board President should contact the succession group to ask if there are recommendations from the group for a qualified CEO.

- **Interim President/CEO**

It is recommended that the _____ (highest ranking staff member) be appointed as interim President/CEO, supported by the Board and staff. The _____ would have responsibility for all operations during the search and placement process, possibly with the assistance from a chosen individual from WACE's Interim Executive List, until the new President/CEO is on site. Additional guidelines, as deemed appropriate by the directors, would be anticipated.

- **Management Development**

Ongoing opportunities will be provided to management staff to broaden their knowledge and experience base, develop new skills and continue the enhancement of existing expertise. This will be offered through formal education and informal training/experience opportunities, and will be analyzed on an individual basis. The President/CEO will provide the Board of Directors an annual update of his/her estimation of the capabilities of management staff.

- **Annual Review Process**

In order to keep the information current and timely, President/CEO and the Board of Directors will evaluate, bi - annually, the position of President/CEO and update the requirements and job description, as needed.

Enclosures: Succession Plan/Process, Sample RFP, Sample Ad, Sample Sheets

Your Chamber of Commerce Succession Plan/Process

The following provides a detailed plan for the **succession** of the President/CEO of YOUR CHAMBER. This plan may differ depending upon the circumstances of the President/CEO's departure.

Step I President/CEO notifies Board of Directors, in writing, of intent to retire/resign (ideally with a minimum of 90 days notice).... or.... the position is suddenly, unexpectedly vacated. In the case of an unexpected vacancy the Board of Directors may refer to WACE's Executive & Chamber Assistance Directory, or ask assistance from a neighboring Chamber.

Step II Board of Directors activates a search committee of three of its members.

Step III Search committee meets promptly to determine if a search firm is to be utilized and/or if an internal search will be conducted.

Step IV If a search firm is to be utilized, the search committee will arrange to interview several firms for consideration. Once face-to-face interviews are conducted with the firms contacted, the search committee selects a firm and an acceptable contract negotiated. Care should be taken in regard to fees, deadlines and progress reports.

Step V If an internal search is selected, a coordinator should be designated from the search committee. The search committee should draft an advertisement suitable for wide use. A working example is attached. The committee should determine the location and frequency of the ad(s). Some considerations could include:

- Position & Title
- Salary Range
- Benefits
- Membership Size
- Chamber Budget
- Total Number of staff
- Population Served
- Description of general duties, educational or training requirements
- Deadline to apply & Instructions to apply

Suggested media for advertisement may include:

W.A.C.E. Pink Sheets
PO Box 1736
Sacramento, CA 95812-1736

Local Newspapers
xxxx Any Street
Your Town, USA

Regional/Metro Newspapers
Xxx That Avenue
That Town, USA

Request for Search Firm Proposal

Name/Address of
Search Firm

Subject: Request for Proposal

The Board of Directors of YOUR CHAMBER, a not-for-profit membership corporation, requests your proposal to perform a search for qualified professionals to fill the position of President/CEO. A copy of the position description is enclosed. We expect all candidates to have the following qualifications:

- Five years experience as CEO of a Chamber or other membership association. An Executive/Senior Vice President of a Chamber may be considered.
- Thorough understanding of the political environment of chambers, trade associations and the business community.
- Demonstrated leadership, decisiveness and foresight.
- Thorough knowledge of finance, economics, planning, management and/or competitive strategies, evidenced by applicable degree(s) and/or appropriate experience.
- Excellent communication and interpersonal skills as well as strong public speaking ability.

Your proposal should include the initial search, screening and interviewing processes to arrive at no more than four final candidates. Your proposal must reach us no later than _____.

Sincerely,

Chairman
Board of Directors

Enclosures

Sample Ad

President/CEO, Chamber of Commerce

The Board of Directors of YOUR CHAMBER, located in YOUR TOWN, seeks a highly qualified, experienced and educated individual to assume the duties of President/CEO. This position will be responsible for the management of a ____ member not-for-profit organization with ____ employees and an annual budget of \$____. Candidates must exhibit strong organizational, management, financial, interpersonal and written/verbal communication skills. Must be able to work with government officials. Salary & benefits are commiserate with experience. Please submit your resume with salary history to _____ at _____, no later than _____.

(more specific chamber information is given if used in a trade publication)

Candidate Evaluation Sheet

Name _____

Current title & organization _____

Time in present position _____

Last three positions, company name and length in position:

(1) Title and organization _____

Time in position _____

(2) Title and organization _____

Time in position _____

(3) Title and organization _____

Time in position _____

Qualifications that relate to skill requirements:

Education qualifications _____

Experience qualifications _____

Overall impression of candidate _____

Ranking _____ **of** _____ **applicants interviewed**

Script for Interviewing Applicants

Position - President/CEO

YOUR CHAMBER

Date: _____

Name of Candidate _____

Name of Evaluator _____

Questions:

- Please describe, in depth and in your own words, the nature of your duties at your present position, to whom you report, what you like(d) and dislike(d) about your assignment, and, why you chose or might choose to leave.
- Please share with us what you know about YOUR CHAMBER.
- Please provide us with your version of what chambers are all about and what their future might be in the community.
- What value would you expect to add as President/CEO of YOUR CHAMBER?
- Describe your leadership style. How has it developed/evolved?
- Where do you see YOUR CHAMBER in five years? 10 years? Where do you see yourself in these same time frames?
- Please discuss your philosophy as it relates to board roles & responsibilities.
- Please give us your definition of membership services.

Note: These questions are samples only and not intended to be all-inclusive.

Care should be exercised to incorporate additional questions that address specific, current issues and responsibilities.

Reference Check and Data Verification

Name of Applicant _____

Application completed

Resume received

Name of School _____

Attendance verified

Graduated? Date _____

Name of School _____

Attendance verified

Graduated? Date _____

Former Employer _____ **

Dates employed: From _____ to _____

Title(s) _____

Eligible for rehire? Yes _____ No _____

Former employer contact:

Name _____ Title _____

Comments: _____

Reference check completed by: _____ Date: _____

** Complete a separate sheet for each employer verified

Designing the Job Description President/CEO

This form should be filled out at the time of the policy/plan is reviewed by the board of directors. (You may delete this wording when presenting it to your board, it's FYI only)

In the spaces below, evaluate the present position of the Chamber and identify the responsibilities and purpose of those tasks for the President/CEO position being evaluated. The Board of Directors and the President/CEO should complete these sheets.

Current strengths of the Chamber:

Current weaknesses of the Chamber:

Potential future Chamber opportunities:

Potential Chamber threats:

What challenges must be successfully resolved by the President/CEO?

What primary attributes must the President/CEO possess?

Identify the regularly performed tasks and responsibilities of the position and the purpose of each:

Task/Responsibility	Purpose
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President/CEO Job Description Worksheet

(Used to consolidate data from design worksheets)

Purpose of position:

Minimal requirements to fill position (experience, education and attributes):

Major Tasks/Responsibilities: