

**ACHIEVE
YOUR GOALS**

CITY HALL

CAO Performance
Evaluation Toolkit.
A free resource benefiting
Canadian Municipalities.

CAMA  ACAM

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY ELECTED OFFICIALS FOR THE CAMA CAO PERFORMANCE EVALUATION TOOLKIT





FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY THE ELECTED OFFICIALS FOR THE [CAMA CAO PERFORMANCE EVALUATION TOOLKIT](#)

Why is it important to do an annual Performance Evaluation for the Chief Administrative Officer?

The relationship between the City Manager, Town Manager, or Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) and the Mayor and Council is very important. For many municipalities, the annual performance evaluation is the key process to assess and document the effectiveness of the CAO's strategic and operational management decisions and actions.

CAMA developed this toolkit because we wanted to encourage a broader, more holistic understanding of performance conversations, which should be part of a process, not just an annual event.

The toolkit looks like a large document. Do I have to use it all?

Please don't be intimidated by CAMA's Toolkit. It is designed to be a system that is flexible for the CAO, Mayor and Council. It's a tool that lets you construct an evaluation process based on what works for you and your organization. It offers a variety of ways to choose goals, set competencies, conduct your self-assessment, and have ongoing performance evaluation conversations. A formal evaluation process is better for both parties.

CAMA's CAO Performance Evaluation Project Task Force reviewed input from Canadian municipalities to identify effective sample documents being used across the country today. You'll find that CAMA's recommended performance review process incorporates many of the practices already used throughout municipalities in Canada; but packaged in an easy-to-use kit.

To get a better understanding of how to use the toolkit, watch our twenty minute [webinar](#) which is designed to show you how it can be customized and scaled to your municipality. For CAOs, the toolkit provides a process that uses strategies and templates that can be shared with the Mayor and Council to ensure goals, key results, core competencies, and performance measures are mutually understood.

For Mayor and Council, the Toolkit underscores the value of CAO performance conversations, and offers a process for conducting the performance evaluations fairly. It focuses on aligning the CAO's goals with the organization's Strategic Plan, and to assist all of us to achieve our local vision and create stronger municipalities and communities.

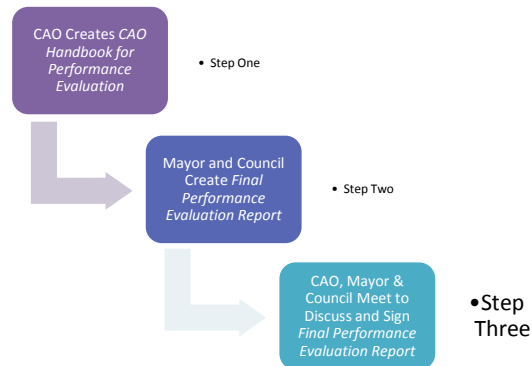
What does the toolkit do?

The toolkit will help the CAO and the Mayor and members of Council focus conversations on organizational excellence.

The Toolkit also fosters a process:

- For setting annual work-related goals;
- Developing a shared understanding of performance measures; and
- Recognizing the CAO's achievements and assessing what is being accomplished and areas for improvement.
- The Toolkit will help you to align the CAO's goals with the municipality's Strategic Plan.

How many steps does it take to do the performance evaluation?



The year-long process keeps organizational goals and the CAO's goals in alignment.

CAMA's Toolkit has a three-step process. The steps are:

1. Create the *Handbook for Performance Evaluation*;
2. Hand-off of the Handbook to Mayor & Council, who will use it to create a *Final Performance Evaluation Report*; and
3. Sit down together to review and discuss the performance evaluation and set new goals for the coming year.

Using this 3-step process will help organizations:

- Maintain transparency and foster respect and trust.
- Achieve standards of excellence.
- Improve employee relations.
- Achieve organizational goals.
- Maintain effective, ongoing communication.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY THE ELECTED OFFICIALS

If I am a Mayor or a member of Council how do I start the evaluation process for our CAO?

You need to schedule a session with Council to set the goals of Council for the upcoming year or for the term. These goals will be used at year end to assess the CAO's performance.

Certain goals set last year may remain unchanged, as they are ongoing strategic goals for the municipality and therefore for the CAO.

Other goals may be new, so this is the time to discuss all of the goals for the coming year, including:

- The CAO's personal development goals, and professional goals and interests;
- staff goals;
- The organization's initiatives;
- The timelines to achieve the goals for the municipality; and
- The potential for enhancing the relationships between the CAO, Mayor and Council, staff, stakeholders, and the community.

Are there any tools or reference guides that Councils can use to assist them in setting annual goals and objectives for the CAO?

There is a section in the toolkit that references this specifically on Page 10 and 11 and also the [Strategic Planning Template 1.3](#).

The toolkit can be found on this link: <http://www.camacam.ca/about/resources/cao-performance> along with several other templates and documents that are useful during this process. They are provided to you in both PDF and word formats in case you would like to customize them to your municipality.

What is a Strategic Plan?

If you don't know where you are going you will end up some place else. Every community should collectively set a Strategic Plan that provides Council and staff with a common focus, priorities, outcomes and strategies to be pursued over the term of the plan. What do you hope to accomplish as a Council in that time? What do you want your legacy to be? The Strategic Plan should align with longer term plans and is a key component of the accountability relationship between the CAO and Council. It will also keep Council and Administration on the same page and provide direction for departmental plans and budgets.

What is Council's role in strategic planning?

Council should participate in the early stages of the Strategic Plan including the environmental scanning and the identification of strategic themes and outcomes and approve the final plan. Senior administration's role is to develop a suggested process, design and lead all aspects of the strategic planning process, lead/conduct all research and analysis required, prepare the draft strategic plan for Council's approval and lastly design and implement progress tracking and a reporting system to Council.

What is a strategic priority?

All Councils and senior managers strive to put the needs of the communities they serve above all else. This starts with identifying the strategic priorities that matter most to the citizens. The strategic priorities provide the direction for the Strategic Plan. Your strategic priorities must align with and fulfill your city's unique vision, mission and values. No two cities are the same, however five of the most common strategic priorities guiding local government today are: transparent government, strong and resilient economy, safe and flourishing neighbourhoods, sustainable environment and infrastructure, and effective and efficient services.

What is a performance metric?

A performance metric measures an organization's behaviour, activities and performance. It should support a range of stakeholder needs from customers to employees.

What is a competency?

A competency is a critical behaviour and skill that supports an individual's ability to perform the technical or domain competencies of a job.

How do I manage 6 Steps to Part 2 (of the Mayors and Council's process)?



Just as the six parts to step one could be condensed into two parts, so too can the Mayor and Council's process. We can group the parts into **Conducting the Assessment and Delivering the Assessment**.

Conducting the Assessment involves four steps:

First, Council receives and reviews the CAO's Information Package.

Next, Mayor and Council organize their review and determine the review process. This can be done by the Mayor and Council with internal support, or they may wish to designate or establish a Committee of Council. Some may choose to retain a consultant to assist with the process and to prepare the *Final Evaluation Report*. It's important to note that there is no right way to do this. It can be done by the Mayor, all of Council, or a Committee of Council; but it's important that it is inclusive and all Council members have a voice in the evaluation.

Mayor and Council should work with the Performance Evaluation Template created by the CAO, and, once they have done that, they should discuss their review as well as the CAO's self-assessment. This can be done in camera at Committee or at Council.

The last two parts are for Delivering the Assessment:

Council prepares for the discussion with the CAO by reviewing the *Final Evaluation Report*. Once Council is satisfied, the report should be provided to the CAO. This can be done at a face-to-face session. Any written document should be provided to the CAO in advance so he or she can review it prior to the meeting with the Mayor and Council.

The Mayor and all Councillors are part of the CAO Performance Evaluation Committee but one Council member wants to remain anonymous on their comments and feedback. The process is overseen by the Human Resources Manager.

Anonymous complaints from citizens are usually not responded to and this situation should be no different. The Mayor should be the person that makes the decision on how the comments are submitted by Councillors so that everybody is on the same page.

What is the best way to discuss the Performance Evaluation Report with the CAO?

There is a formal meeting where a conversation takes place between the Mayor and Council and the CAO.

The meeting has four objectives, and if necessary, more than one meeting can take place to cover all of the four objectives. These are, as described in the graphic above:

1. The joint review of the formal evaluation report.
2. The final review of the proposed new goals for the CAO.
3. Agreement and sign off on the report; and
4. Meeting to set goals for the upcoming year, to start the cycle again.

Someone should be given the responsibility to document the final ratings and note any themes that may have emerged. These should be discussed during the joint review of the Final Performance Evaluation Report. This meeting should take place in an In-Camera/Closed Session of Council. Before this meeting, the Mayor and Council should decide how the feedback will be discussed, how one of a kind comments will be handled, who will chair the performance evaluation conversation, and the purpose and desired outcome of the meeting. The City Clerk is usually the only other staff member in this meeting and can officially record the discussion.

The Mayor and Council and the CAO sign off on the document. Council may delegate this task to the Mayor. Once the report is signed off, the cycle for the new year begins again.

How do I deliver positive and constructive feedback?

It has been said of performance evaluations that when an atmosphere of trust, respect and transparency characterizes the relationship between CAO, Mayor and Council, the CAO's performance can have a direct and lasting impact on the ability of Council to carry out its mandate. That being said, sometimes constructive feedback is necessary, and there are tips to do this effectively.

- The earlier the better is a good rule.
- If the feedback did not come with the actual event, and has accrued through the performance evaluation period, then there are some suggestions to keep in mind.
 - Don't use the delivery of the constructive feedback to vent.
 - Accentuate the positive. If there is a constructive comment, there must be a positive outcome that is being sought. What is it?
 - Ask how the problem originated—it helps to get to the root of the problem.
 - Involve the CAO and Mayor and Council in the solution.
- For positive feedback, it is equally important to be fair and realistic. Too much positive feedback can be deceiving. A better approach is to coach the CAO on the type of appropriate and effective behaviour that could be exercised more often.

Are there additional steps that can be completed in the Performance Evaluation?

CAMA's Toolkit has suggestions for optional steps you might like to add to your process.

OPTIONAL STEPS TO THE CAO PERFORMANCE EVALUATION	
DEVELOP A COMPENSATION FRAMEWORK	<p>When the Mayor and Council meet to discuss the Final Evaluation Report, they may use the time to decide upon compensation. A Compensation Framework helps to link compensation to performance by basing compensation decisions on:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Economic climate of the municipality and community;• The general status of comparable compensation in the private sector of the community;• Compensation decisions for other employees of the local government; and,• A comparative salary review.

OPTIONAL STEPS TO THE CAO PERFORMANCE EVALUATION	
SET UP QUARTERLY REVIEWS	Many municipalities use quarterly reviews to ensure that conversations about performance are ongoing.
SURVEY STAKEHOLDERS	<p>360 degree surveys can be conducted for internal and external stakeholders, but don't have to be done every year.</p> <p>If a survey of stakeholders is desirable, municipalities could survey stakeholders such as executive officers and others who report directly to the CAO and other stakeholders identified by the CAO. The survey gives a broader picture of the CAO's performance.</p>

Who can I contact if I have questions about CAMA's CAO Performance Evaluation Toolkit?

Please contact Jennifer Goodine, CAMA's Executive Director, at the CAMA National Office if you have any questions or comments about the toolkit (1-866-771-2262 or admin@camacam.ca). She can also put you in touch with CAMA members that have used the toolkit that may be able to provide you with additional guidance and advice based on their experience.