



“THE TOP TEN WAYS A CAO CAN EFFECTIVELY USE THEIR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO IMPROVE THEIR PRODUCTIVITY”

&

“LAUNCH OF THE TOOLKIT FOR THE EFFECTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE CAO”

TOOLKIT
FOR THE EFFECTIVE EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO THE CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER



MEET THE PANELLISTS



Brenda Orchard



Jennifer Goodine



Denisa H. Habibovic



Victoria Bowering

AGENDA

Highlights of Survey Results from Executive Assistants & CAOs across the Canada

Overview of the Toolkit: Executive Assistant and CAO Audiences

“Top Ten Ways a CAO Can Effectively Use Their Executive Assistant to Improve Their Productivity”

A CAO’s Perspective

Q & A with Panellists

THANK YOU COMMITTEE MEMBERS

- **Elizabeth Grenon, Executive Assistant, City of Dawson, YT**
- **Victoria Bowering, Executive Assistant to the CAO's Office, City of Nanaimo, BC**
- **Cassandra Rutland, Executive Assistant to the CFO/Commissioner of Corporate Services, Region of Peel, ON**
- **Beth Readman, Executive Assistant to the CAO & Administration, County of Lennox and Addington, ON**
- **Jacque Thrower, Executive Assistant, Township of West Lincoln, ON**
- **Safiya Khan, Asset Management Specialist, City of Mississauga, ON**
- **Denise Habibovic, Retired Executive Assistant to the CFO/Commissioner of Corporate Services, City of Mississauga, ON**
- **Roxana Dima, Executive Assistant to the City Manager, City of Dollard-des-Ormeaux, QC**
- **Tracy Hart, Executive Assistant, Office of the CAO, Town of Truro, NS**

**SURVEY
RESULTS
FALL 2022**

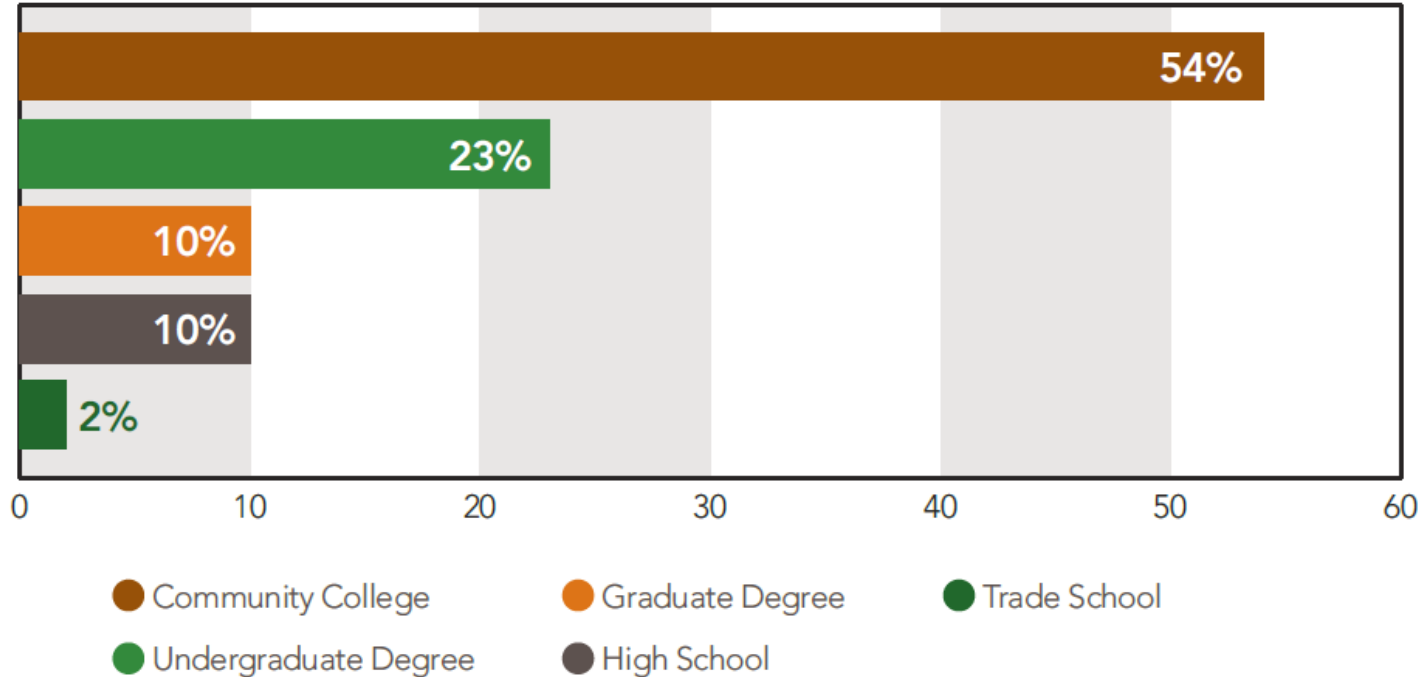
**130 Executive Assistants / 95%
Women**

**63 CAMA Members / 50% Women &
50% Men / 90% CAOs & 10% Direct
Reports**

**Representation from all Population
Categories & Provinces and
Territories**

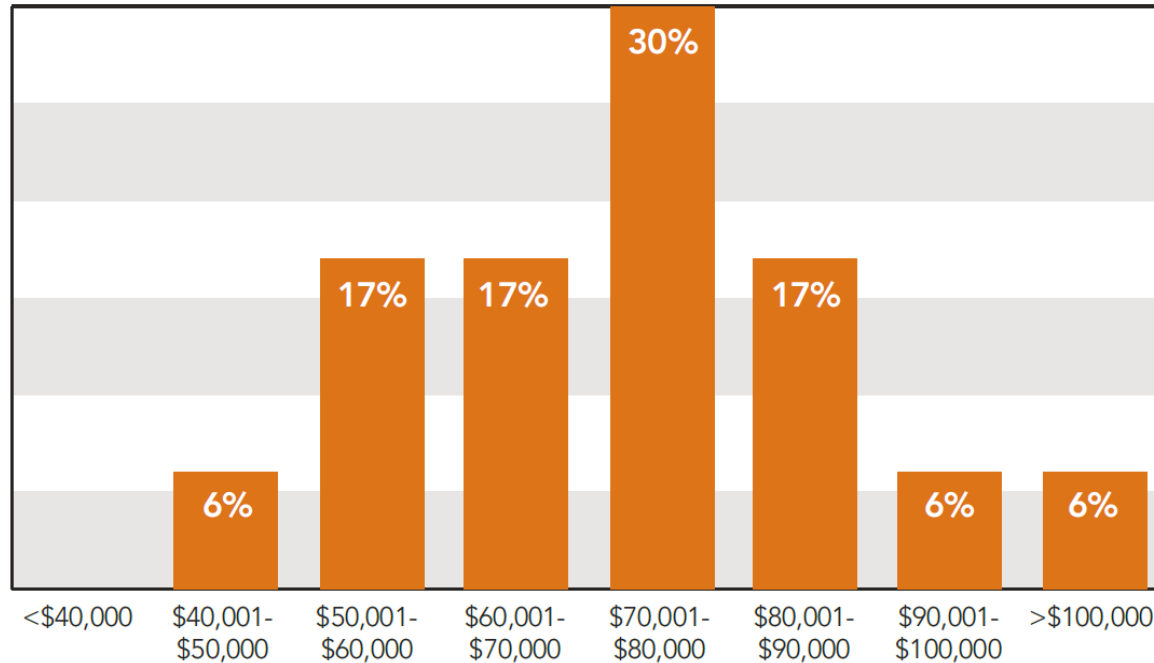
EDUCATION

Q4 What is the highest level of education you have completed?



SALARY

Q6 What is your current salary range?



**EXPERIENCE –
HOW MANY
YEARS DO YOU
HAVE AS AN
EXECUTIVE
ASSISTANT?**

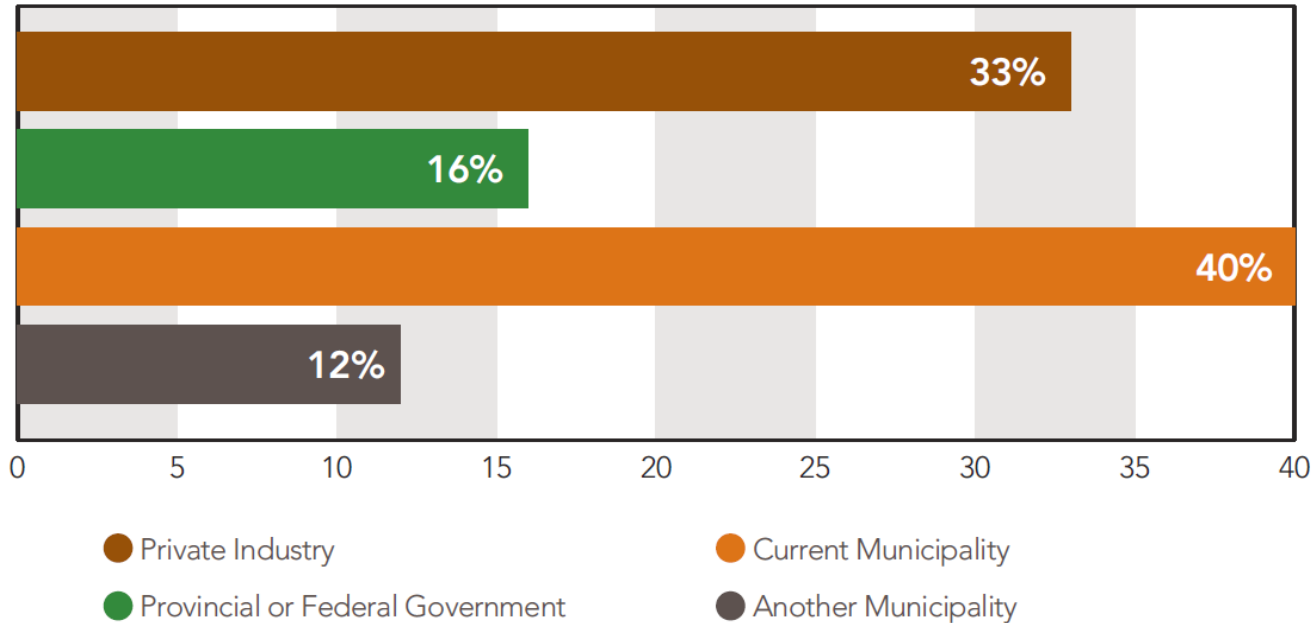
73% under 10 years

50% under 5 years

8% more than 20 years

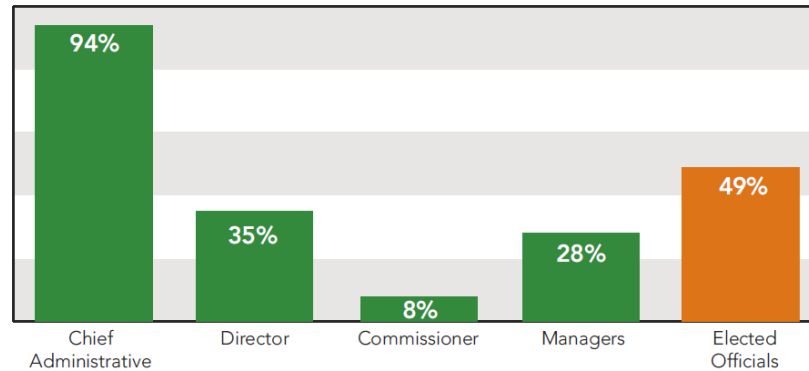
BACKGROUND

Q8 Prior to your current job as Executive Assistant where did you work?

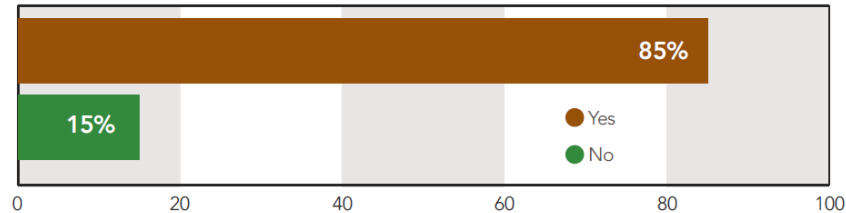


HOW MANY BOSSES?

Q9 To whom in your organization do you provide administrative support? (Choose all that apply)



Q5 In addition to you, does your Executive Assistant provide support to other staff or elected officials?

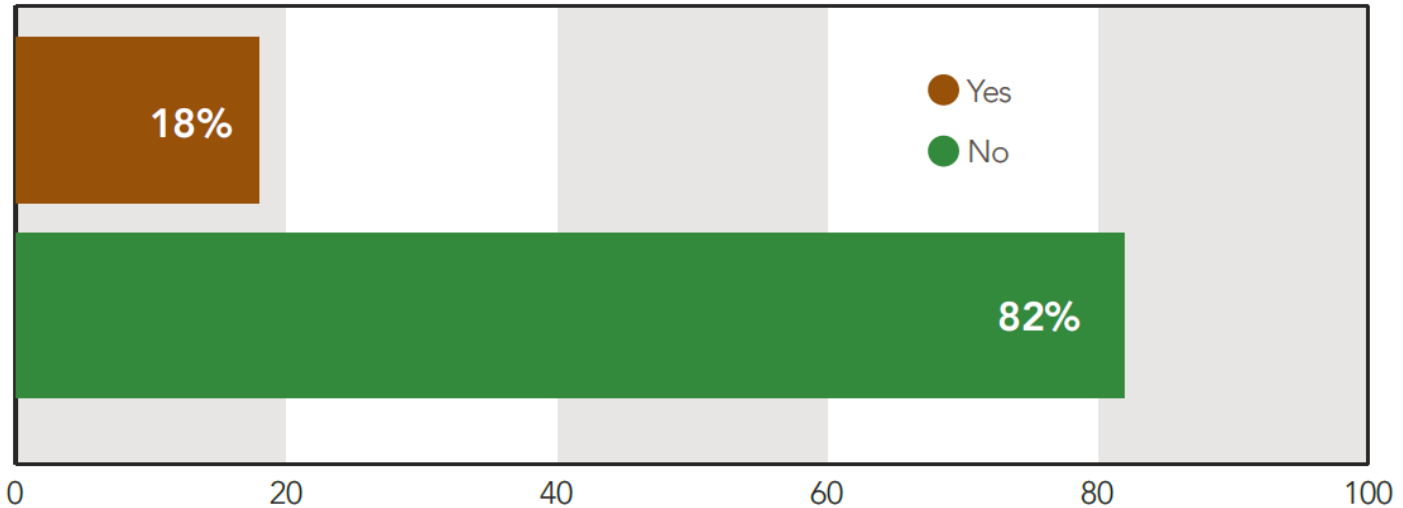


What is the Most Rewarding Aspect of Being Executive Assistant to the CAO?

Executive Assistants find their profession to be extremely rewarding. They get to perform a variety of tasks, while supporting the CAO in implementing the vision for the municipality, and helping others solve their problems. There is a strong sense of accomplishment in seeing many projects come to fruition through teamwork, which is most often very appreciated. This in turn, makes the organization successful and the Executive Assistant played a huge part in it behind the scenes.

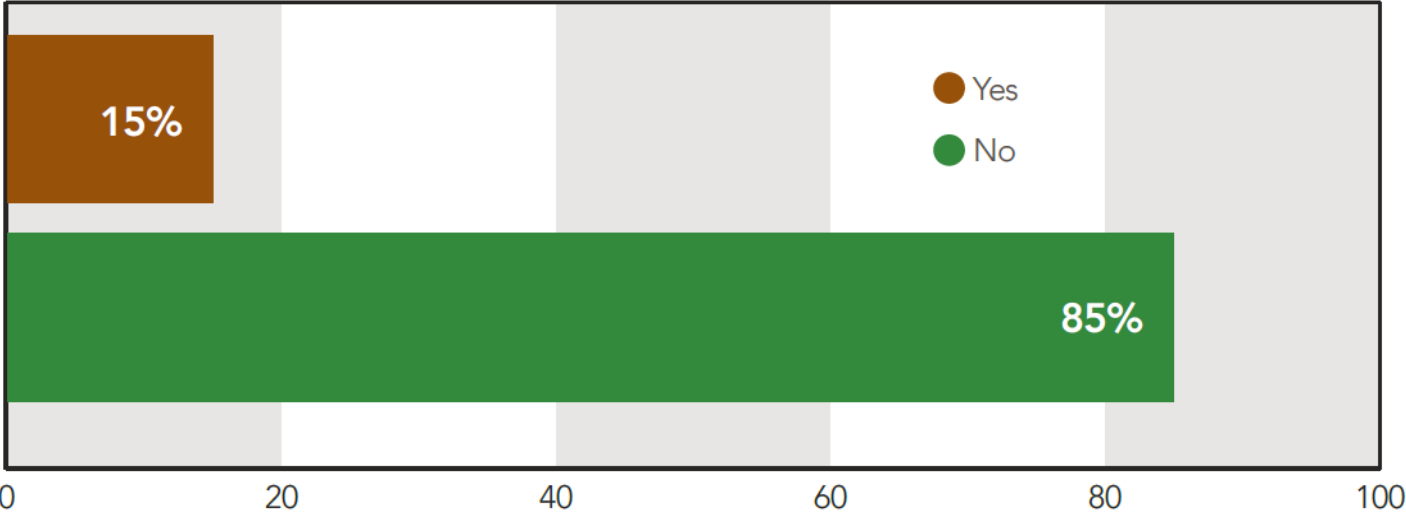
SUPERVISION

Q11 In your current role, do you supervise any other employees?



MEMBERSHIP IN ASSOCIATIONS

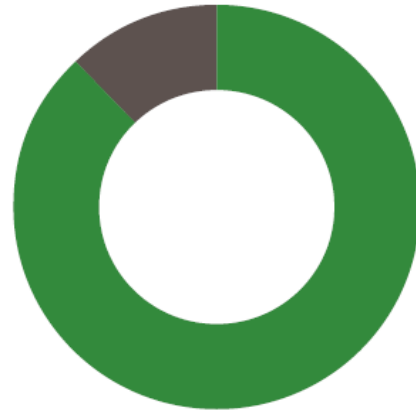
Q12 Do you currently belong to any association for Executive Assistants?



PERFORMANCE EVALUATIONS



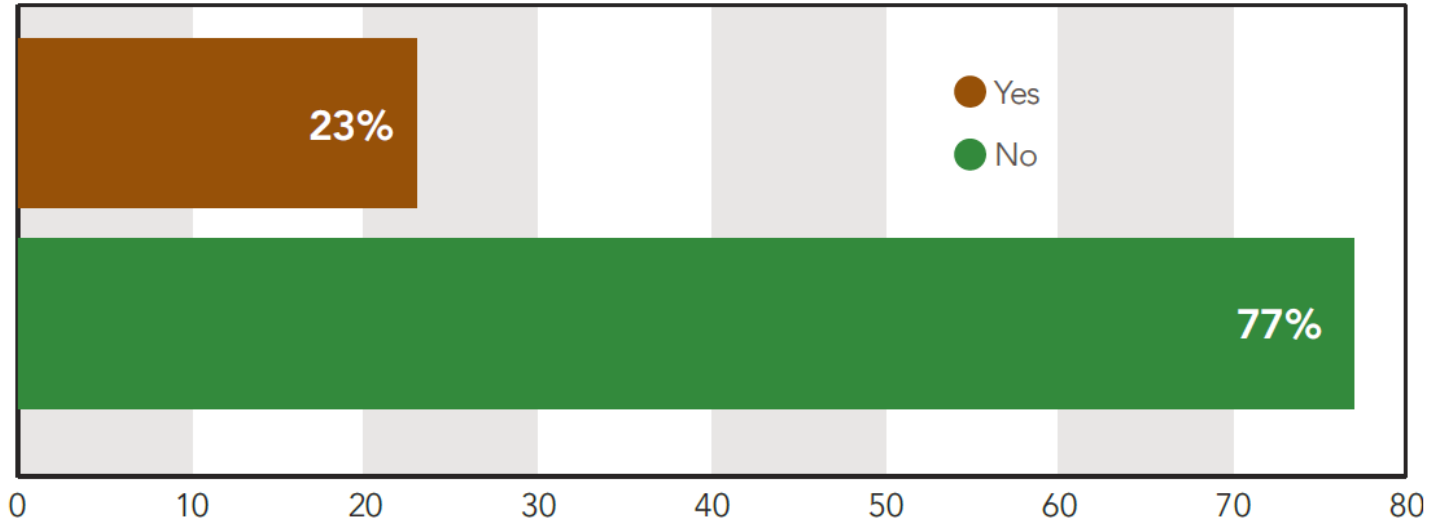
77% of the Executive Assistants received an annual performance evaluation.



88% of the CAOs provided an annual performance evaluation.

MENTORSHIP

Q14 Do you currently have a mentor?



HOW CAN AN EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT IMPROVE THEIR SKILLS?

Training

Time Management

Mentorship

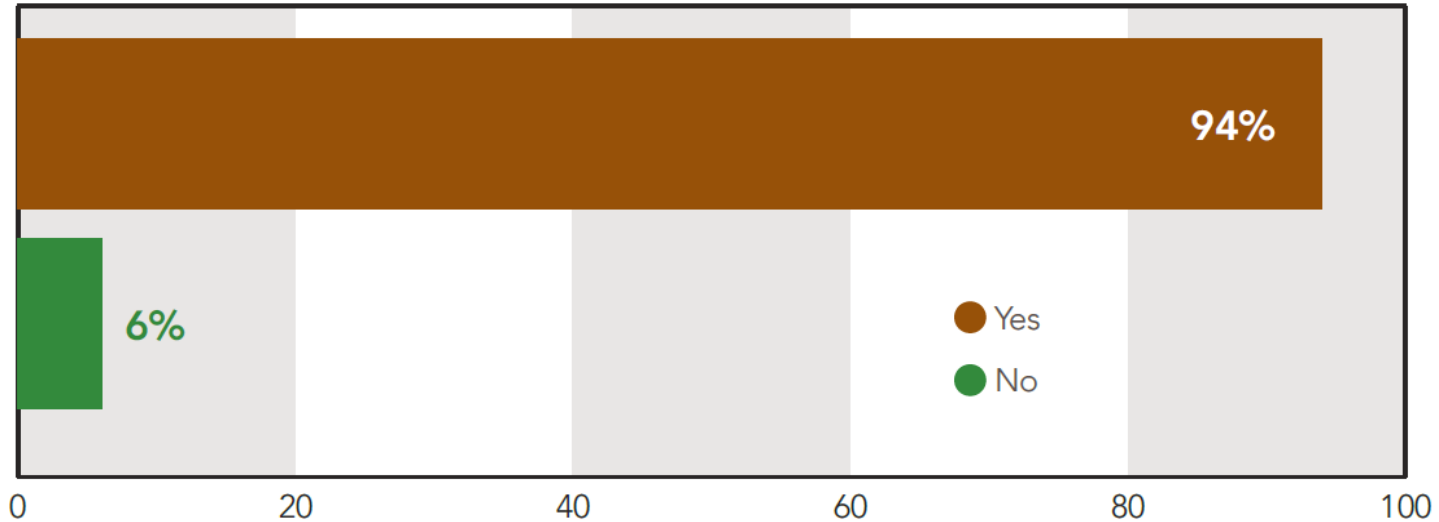
Networking

Having the CAO Better Communicate and Utilize their Skills

TRAINING

BUDGETS BETWEEN \$600 TO \$10,000 (AVERAGE \$3,000)

Q8 Do you provide a training budget for your Executive Assistant to pursue education each year?



RECOMMENDED TRAINING FOR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS

Executive Assistant Courses Specific to their Role (Minute Taking, Project Management, Technology, Event Planning & Records Management)

Communications, Writing & Building Relationships

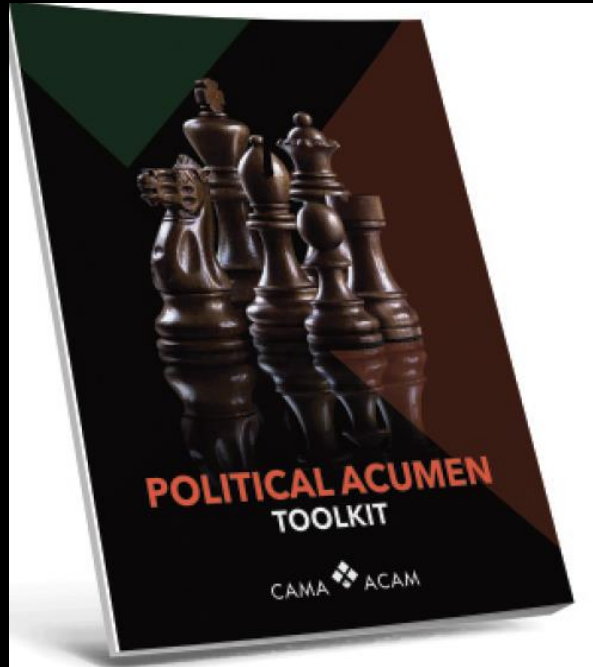
Local Government

Financial & Human Resources

Time Management & Organizational Skills

Leadership Training

POLITICAL ACUMEN SKILLS – 71%



<https://politicalacumen.camacam.ca>

WORK-LIFE BALANCE



- Vacation
- Relax
- Exercise
- Spend time with family
- Travel
- Set Boundaries
- Have a Flexible Work Schedule

TOP TEN SKILLS MOST IMPORTANT IN THE ROLE	TOP TEN DUTIES/RESPONSIBILITIES
Excellent Communication	Meeting Management
Organizational Skills	Communications
Time Management	Scheduling & Calendar Management
Detail Oriented	Financial/Human Resource Management
Information Technology	Executive Administrative Support
Critical Thinking & Being Proactive	Research & Analytical Skills
Adaptability in a Changing Environment	Leadership Skills
High Level of Confidentiality	By-law & Office Procedures
Diplomacy & Performing Under Pressure	Travel Management
Multi-tasking	Report Writing

ADVICE TO A NEW EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT

Importance of Building Relationships

Fast-paced ever-changing work environment that is challenging and rewarding

Organized, attention to details, professional, good listener and keeping confidentiality

Creating a positive relationship and communicating with the CAO – don't take things personally.

CAMA members also commented on building a positive relationship, asking questions, and working as a team

Pay attention to everything happening around you.

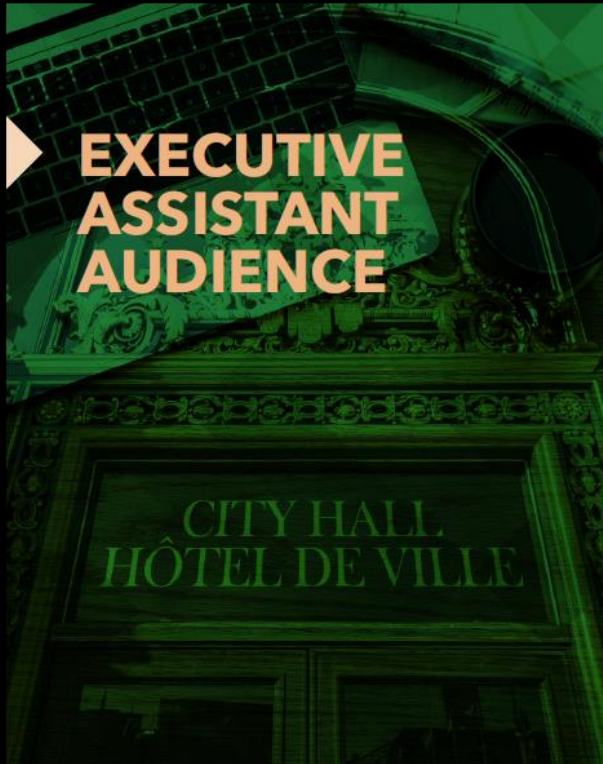
Interesting Facts: Challenges of Being an Executive Assistant

When asked what the most challenging aspect of being an Executive Assistant to the CAO (or other senior executive) is, both sides agreed that the job can be a very demanding and stressful work environment, and at times, managing and balancing multiple priorities and tasks simultaneously can become overwhelming. Dealing with the public and elected officials can also be difficult. The Executive Assistants also highlighted the importance of developing a good relationship with their boss, with communicating regularly being the key to a successful partnership.

“The Executive Assistant role is imperative to any successful organization. I often compare their role to being like the wheels on a bus, and our leaders are the bus itself. Without its wheels, a bus cannot move!”

-Executive Assistant

TWO SECTIONS – EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT & CAO





**EXECUTIVE
ASSISTANT
AUDIENCE**

Introduction to Local Government

Applying for the Position and Follow-Up

Tips on Completing a Performance Evaluation

Developing a Back-Up Plan for the Office

Technical Office Skills

Leadership Skills



**EXECUTIVE
ASSISTANT
AUDIENCE**

How to Prepare for a CAO Becoming a Member in Transition

Political Acumen Skills

Relationship Building & Networking

Exercising Self Care

Adapting to New Leadership

Words of Wisdom from EAs and CAOs, case studies, downloadable resources



**▶ CHIEF
ADMINISTRATIVE
OFFICER
AUDIENCE**

Tips for the Hiring Process

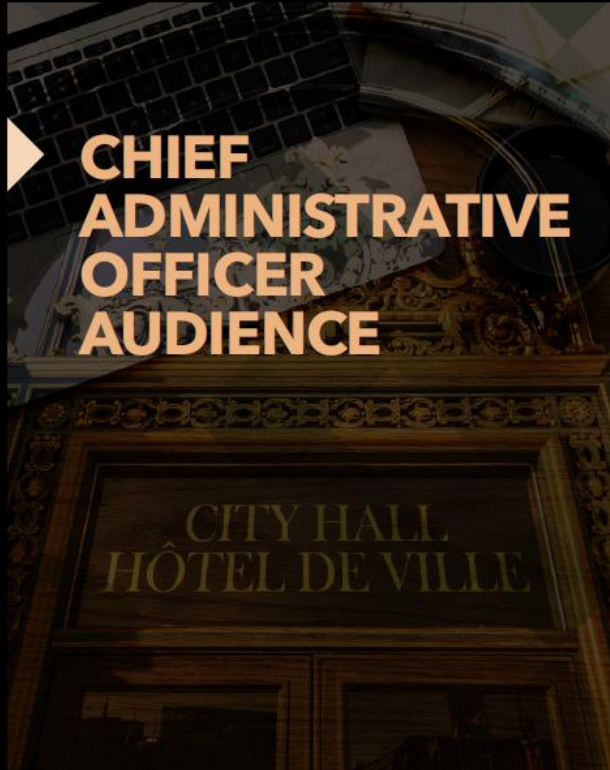
Sample job description, postings,
interview questions

A Business Case to Council if you don't
currently have an Executive Assistant

Finding the Right Personality and Fit

Fostering a Healthy Working Relationship
with your Executive Assistant

TOP TEN WAYS A CAO CAN EFFECTIVELY USE THEIR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO IMPROVE THEIR PRODUCTIVITY



#1 Help Them Understand Your Municipal World

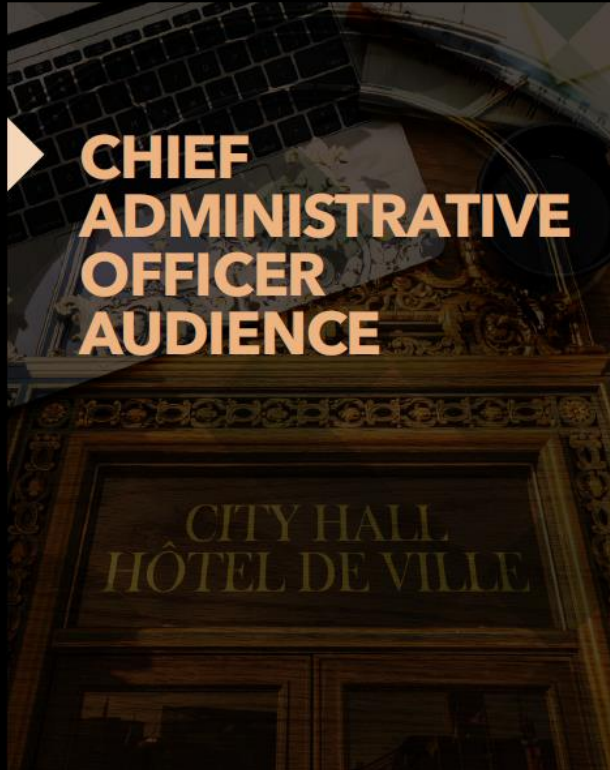
#2 Share Your Specific Preferences

#3 Communicate Daily & Effectively

#4 Be Honest and Clear About Your Expectations

#5 Give Constructive Feedback

TOP TEN WAYS A CAO CAN EFFECTIVELY USE THEIR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO IMPROVE THEIR PRODUCTIVITY



#6 Delegate

#7 Build a Respectful & Trusting Relationship

#8 Show Your Gratitude, Appreciation & Support

#9 Inclusion

#10 Don't be a Bottleneck

ADVICE FROM A CAO OF HOW TO USE YOUR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO MAKE YOUR LIFE EASIER



Finding the Right Personality and Fit

Creating a Partnership with your Executive Assistant

How to Get the Most from your Executive Assistant

ADVICE FROM EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS

"Be clear on your directions and expectations." For example, "I want you to respond to these types of e-mails on my behalf without checking..."

"If there is something the Executive Assistant is lacking suggest it right away and not wait until evaluation time as they need to know sooner than later if there is something they need that they are not getting. It is very important to have a close working relationship with each other and if it isn't working changes need to be made right away."

"Build a relationship of give and take, it is just the two of you so trust matters so much."

"Don't be afraid to give me a list of work. I won't be overwhelmed and then will always feel like I'm doing what you need/want."

ADVICE FROM EXECUTIVE ASSISTANTS

"Be a team – don't just acknowledge errors, but also any positives."

"Be available when you need them – don't brush them off as often the work requires your input."

"The worst thing that one can do is keep the Executive Assistant out of the loop."

"Be completely transparent with expectations. Honesty goes a long way with any employee. Tasks need to be presented concisely and expectations clearly set in the beginning."

"Include them in important meetings so that they have the high-level knowledge of what is happening in the organization."



TOOLKIT
FOR THE EFFECTIVE EXECUTIVE
ASSISTANT TO THE CHIEF
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER

WHERE DO YOU FIND THE TOOLKIT?

Public Document:

<https://www.camacam.ca/about/camas-toolkits>

**CAO Audience can be found as the last chapter
or in a separate document**

**Take home the postcards to give to your EA and
have on your desk.**



**“CAMA’S TOOLKIT
FOR THE EFFECTIVE
EXECUTIVE
ASSISTANT TO THE
CAO:
BUILDING
ADMINISTRATIVE
EXCELLENCE IN LOCAL
GOVERNMENT, AND
CREATING
PARTNERSHIPS AND A
WORK-LIFE BALANCE”**

**Webinar for Executive Assistants June 21,
2023 at 2:00 p.m. EST**

**Advice on Partnerships: Gary Kent, CAO,
Region of Peel, ON**

**Advice on Work-Life Balance in the EA
Profession by Dianna Leeder, Personal Life
Coach**



HOW CAN YOU USE YOUR EXECUTIVE ASSISTANT TO BE MORE EFFECTIVE AS A CAO?

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ASSISTANT TO THE CHIEF
ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER