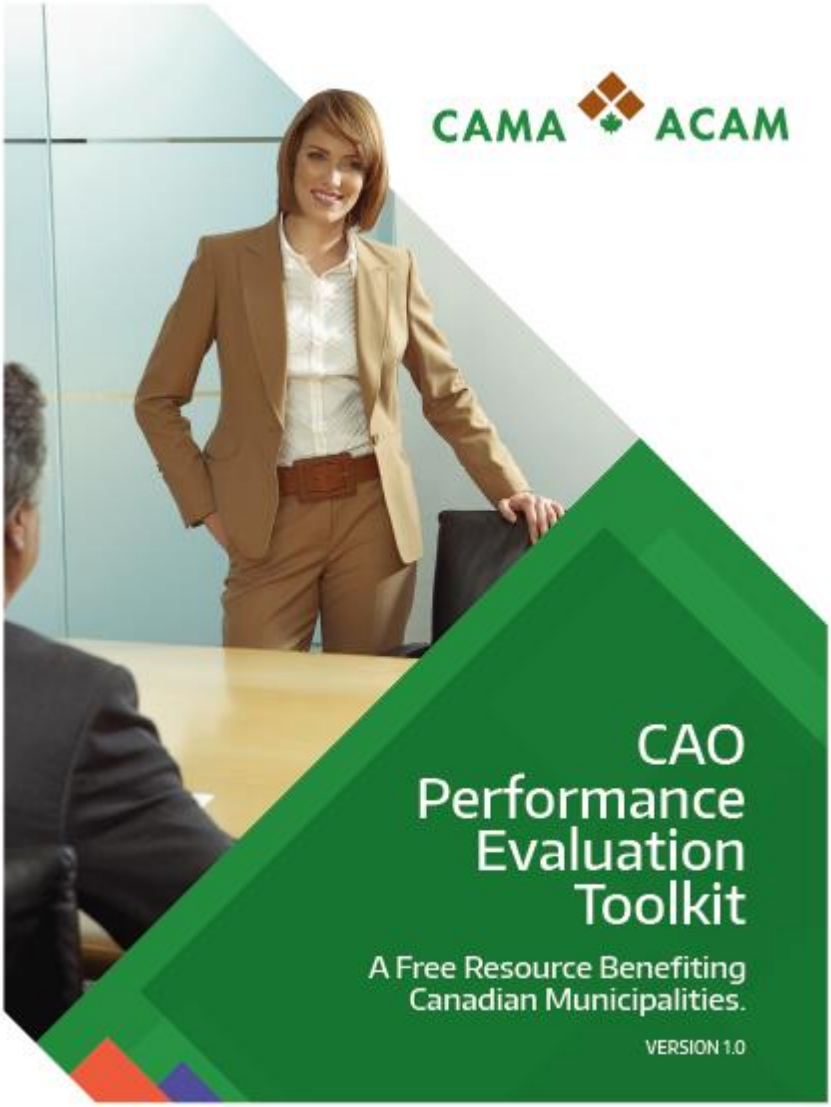
FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS FOR THE CAMA CAO PERFORMANCE EVALUATION TOOLKIT



FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS
BY CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICERS 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.

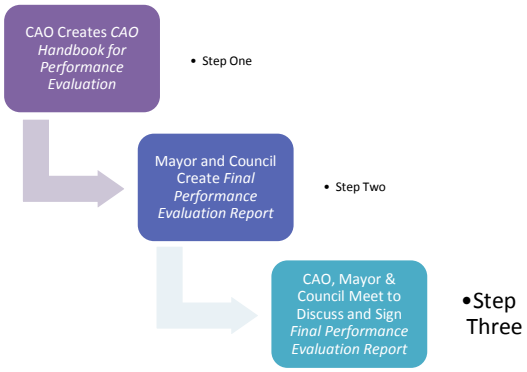
What does the toolkit do?

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 <u>three-step process</u>. 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 CAO

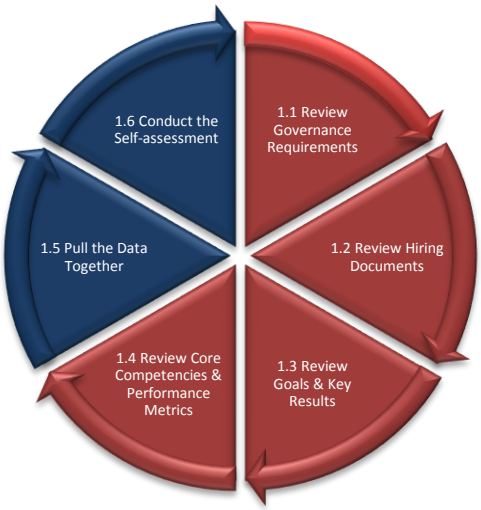
I am a CAO and have reviewed the toolkit but still don't know where to start?

For CAOs, the process begins with deciding to take CAMA's approach. From there, you will begin to gather your job description and other hiring documents that define the CAO's roles and responsibilities. After all, this is the basis for assessing how well you did the job you were hired to do.

Of course, there are other supporting documents that tell more of the story of what the CAO actually does, including the Strategic Plan. You're going to compile that information into a handbook you can give to your Mayor and Council. It's also going to include your own self-assessment for the year.

How Do I Manage 6 Parts to Step 1?

It is important for the CAO to put some work into this first phase of the evaluation by gathering the relevant documentation for the Mayor and Council so that everything is in one place. This is the Annual Performance Evaluation Cycle. The steps are all in two groups: **Gathering Background Information and Building the Assessment Tool.**



PARTS 1 TO 4 INFORM THE BACKGROUND, ASKING THE CAO TO:	
1.1 REVIEW GOVERNANCE REQUIREMENTS	With this process, the CAO gathers and reviews all policies, bylaws, regulations, and acts that relate to the role of the CAO, or that Council must follow in regard to performance evaluations of their CAO.
1.2 REVIEW HIRING DOCUMENTS	The CAO gathers and reviews the CAO job description, contract, and any covenants that might exist.
1.3 REVIEW GOALS & KEY RESULTS	The CAO gathers, and reviews previously agreed upon strategic goals, key result areas, the Strategic Plan, and/or Council priorities.
1.4 REVIEW CORE COMPETENCIES & PERFORMANCE METRICS	The CAO gathers and reviews previously agreed-upon core competencies and the performance metrics that are used to rate performance.
PARTS 5 & 6 ARE TO BUILD THE ASSESSMENT TOOL SO THE CAO SHOULD:	
1.5 PULL DATA TOGETHER	All of the relevant data is pulled together into a binder or file. The data may include any quarterly or periodic reviews that have taken place.
1.6 CONDUCT THE SELF-ASSESSMENT	The CAO uses Template 1.6A: Performance Evaluation to conduct his or her self-assessment. This template is available on the website in PDF or word format so that it can be adapted. This allows the CAO to highlight aspects of his or her performance over the past year that Council may not recall, or that they may not fully be aware of. Metrics can be included and highlighted to provide objective evidence to Council of progress and performance. The Mayor and Council will use the same assessment template in their turn.

What's the first background information that I need?

CAMA views the job description as a foundational background document. The CAO's role is to help take the municipality where it wants to be in both the short and long term, so the job description should speak to this role.

In that job description, CAMA advocates for the inclusion of strategic roles such as capacity-building, cultivating economic prosperity, building an active community, improving quality of life, and other goals related to providing strong leadership. You might want to review your job description to see if it clearly states the CAO's

- responsibilities and roles;
- degree of authority;
- general reporting obligations to Mayor and Council; and
- responsibilities linked to the Strategic Plan.

What other background information do I need?

The handbook will include:

1. Hiring documents and/or your job description.
2. Governance requirements like policies, bylaws and regulations about the CAO position.
3. The municipality's Strategic Plan.
4. Your previously agreed upon strategic goals, and
5. Any reviews that have been conducted already this year.

So why do I need all this material in my *Handbook for Performance Evaluation?*

Good question! You'd think an evaluation form would be enough, but <u>all</u> of this data allows the Mayor and Council to measure performance against documented, agreed on objectives.

And Mayor and Council need all of this data to understand the roles and responsibilities, and the goals so they can be effective and fair in their use of performance evaluation. For example, this will ensure that the CAO is not evaluated on something that was not included in any agreed-on responsibilities or goals. By the way, CAMA advises that you take a look at the goals and make them SMART goals: Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, and Time-based.

How do I create the Assessment Tool?

On CAMA's website, there are two templates that are Microsoft Word documents you can download and tailor to your needs. Read through both of these templates, making notes to yourself about which criteria you'd like to choose.

Template 1.6A Performance Evaluation Template includes:

- **16 performance competency areas that you can choose from. CAMA suggests that you choose five to eight competency areas that are most relevant to you and your organization, or the ones that use words that align with your municipalities way of describing things and that your Council is familiar with.**
- **The template also includes statements about each competency and accompanying standards of behavior.**
- **A rating scale from 1 to 5 is recommended for rating each of these statements, where 1 is Poor and 5 is Excellent.**

Template 1.6B: Additional Performance Evaluation Criteria provides:

- **49 additional performance evaluation criteria. CAMA recommends that out of these 49, you only choose the criteria that are most relevant to you and your organization. These are meant as a guide or a "pick list" and not as a requirement.**

These lists of core competencies were created by using the International City/County Management Association (ICMA) Core Competencies as well as other core competencies used across Canada.

The CAO should prepare an honest and objective assessment of their own performance and document that for Mayor and Council. There may be reasons goals were delayed or not achieved. Some goals may have been exceeded or delivered early. Sharing your thoughts with Council will help the discussion that occurs later.

How can I get my Mayor and Council to use the toolkit?

It is important for you to put some time and effort into organizing the handbook for the Mayor and Council so that they have all the background documents in front of them including the performance evaluation template. This will make it very smooth for you and them.

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.