



2015 ELECTED OFFICIAL SYMPOSIUM

# ***Shall We Dance?*** **Collaborative Civic Leadership**

- 1. The IDEAL** – Roles & Responsibilities
- 2. The REALITY** – Hourglass & Local Government Functions
- 3. COLLABORATION** – Preventive & Remedial Strategies

Lead by  
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## PROFILE FOR GORDON A. MCINTOSH

Gordon McIntosh has 36 years of management, educator and consultancy roles in the local government sector. As President of the Local Government Leadership (LGL) Institute, he provides governance development, strategic facilitation and leadership training services. He has conducted 1,200 workshops involving 140,000 elected and appointed officials on topics such as:

- ***Are We on the Same Page?*** –making strategic choices using priority setting criteria with short term action plans consistent with organizational resources for regular monitoring
- ***Need a Vision Check-Up?*** – moving beyond vision and goal statements to describe and regularly assess progress toward a preferred future
- ***Avoiding the Rocky Shoals*** – developing a success indicators checklist to assess and develop strategies to enhance decision making, role clarity and organizational effectiveness
- ***What's in the Box?*** – determining essential and discretionary services as well as ways to maximize efficiency and ensure a balanced service delivery capacity
- ***What Does It Take?*** – identifying and developing leadership competencies for personal and organizational success along with learning and performance indicators
- ***Playing Nice in the Sand Box!*** – facilitating shared values and goals for enhanced team, interdepartmental, interagency and intergovernmental collaboration

Gordon received the Professional Award of Excellence and served as President of the Local Government Management Association in BC. His managerial positions included corporate, human service and community development functions of local government. As the Islands Trust Executive Director, he worked with a 26 member Council serving the 470 Gulf Islands in the Georgia Basin.

Doctor McIntosh's research work focuses on local government leadership competency modeling and development. Current faculty roles include the Universities of York, Alberta, Tanzanian Public Service and Victoria as well as serving as Local Government Leadership Advisor at the Banff Centre for Management.

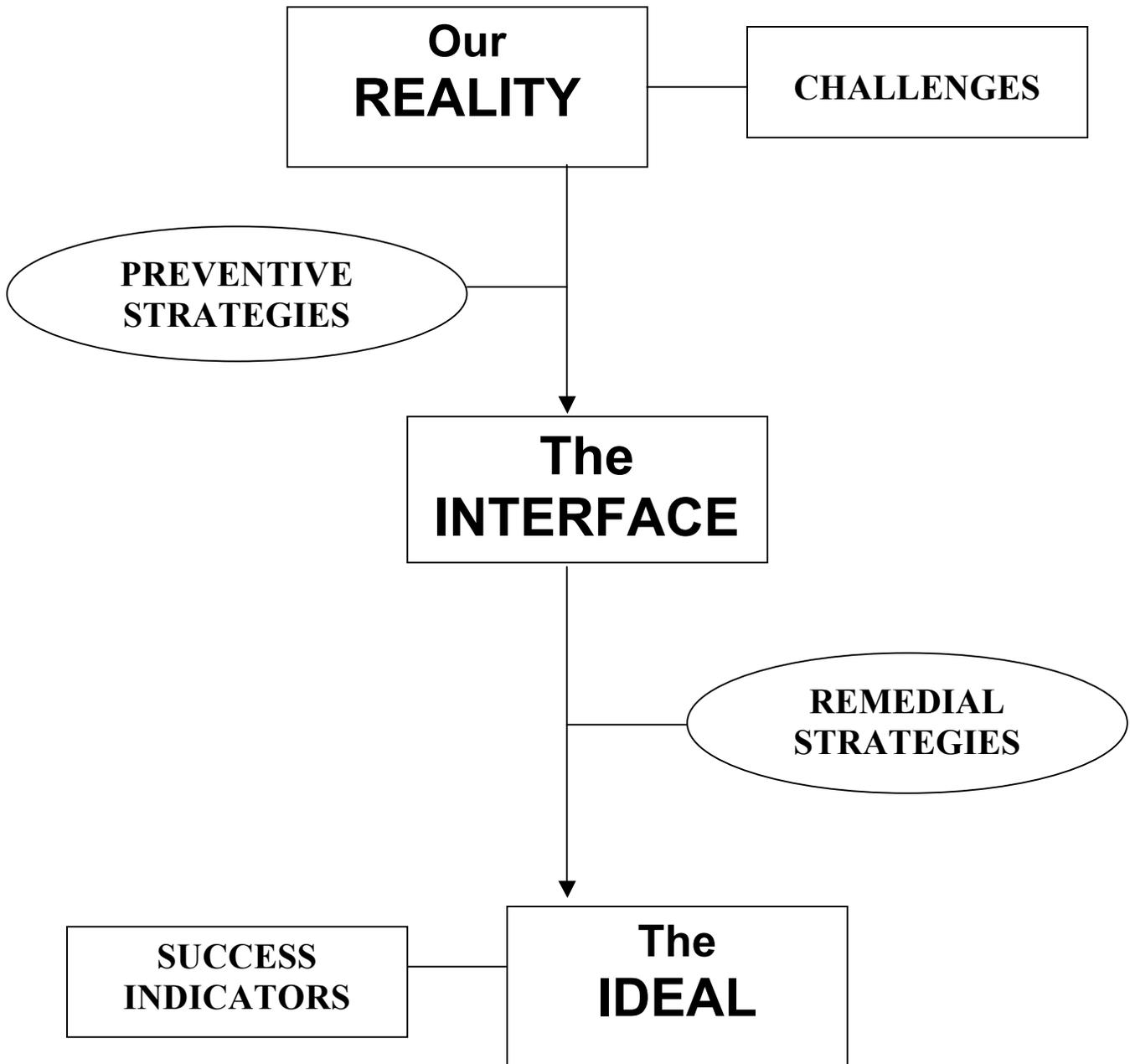
Gordon has developed twenty-five core modules for conference sessions, executive workshops and customized programs. He has delivered programs for local, First Nation, Métis and regional governments as well as municipal associations in every region of Canada and overseas - Palestine, Caribbean, Sri Lanka, Africa and Philippines. Session alumni comment that his sessions are fast paced, interactive, humorous and practical with high satisfaction ratings.

He was raised in Ottawa where he received athletic awards for water polo. Gordon and his wife Diane live in North Saanich where they enjoy cycling, gardening and hiking.

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# WORKSHOP FRAMEWORK

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# 1.0 The IDEAL

## POLITICAL REALM

The role of Council or a Board can be summarized as:

- **Making policy** or decisions within its delegated powers. Decisions range from informal practices to regulatory bylaws such as service levels and resource allocations
- **Setting direction** to be pursued and services delivered. These directions provide guidance to staff and a road map for the community
- **Representing the public interest** while elected officials may advocate specific interests, it is the responsibility of the Council/Board to reflect the broad community interest

The **Policy making** role involves:

- **Ensuring adequate information** is available for good decision-making. This means that when the Board/Council makes a decision it is fact-based.
- **Having a good debate** so that all views are heard in a respectful manner. All members should have an open mind to hear the views of their colleagues.
- **Establishing policy** that is clear and understandable by staff and the public. The organization has the capacity to implement it.
- **Monitoring the impact** and unintended consequences of policy implementation. Targeted dates are established to evaluate the actual results of implementing the policy.
- **Adjusting policies** as required based on new information, emerging conditions or changing resource conditions.

The **direction-setting role** includes responsibilities such as:

- **Examining trends and conditions** to determine how external and community factors are impacting the community and municipality.
- **Soliciting a wide range of community input** and /or feedback to strategic directions for the community from a variety of perspectives.
- **Creating a shared vision** that articulates a community's preferred future through meaningful goal and objective statements while clearly defining the role of local government.
- **Establishing action strategies** that translate the vision and objectives into action plans with target dates to monitor progress and results.
- **Ensuring resources are in place** to align strategies with legislated powers and available fiscal and human resources.

Representing the **public interest** role involves responsibilities such as:

- **Responding to inquiries** and to convey citizen concerns without getting too involved in day-to-day operations.
- **Advocating constituent concerns** on behalf of specific citizen, group or community interests and concerns to Council or the Board.
- **Representing the community** or broad interests of the community in making decisions that are fair and equitable.
- **Scrutinizing operations** by monitoring operations to ensure they are effective in meeting community needs and efficient in achieving value for money.
- **Ensuring Transparency** – adhere to high ethical and accountability standards that are open to public scrutiny.

An elected official’s responsibilities take on different characteristics across each of the Board/Council’s three core roles of making policy, setting direction and representing the public:

- **Representing** or reflecting the community’s interests. Each elected official will define his or her constituents differently.
- **Advocating** community needs or citizen requests. It is the Board/Council as a whole that determines if the local government will advocate or addresses the matter raised.
- **Strategizing** through active involvement in processes to set strategic directions to guide what staff does and how the money is spent to achieve community goals and objectives.
- **Monitoring** the impact of operations, strategy and policy. Elected officials are collectively accountable to the public for the performance of the municipality.
- **Communicating** by keeping touch with the people. Board Members /Councillors are essentially, on the front line for all levels of government.
- **Decision-making** with adequate information through good debate whereby all Board Members/Councillors can support the decision even if they were not in favour of it.

**How does an elected official effectively ‘wear 2 hats’?**

The **Mayor & Chairperson (CEO)** have the same responsibilities as Board Members and Councillors. However, they have considerable influence on business is conducted:

- **Chairperson** – presides over meetings to ensure they follow proper rules of order, must be well informed and invite good debate
- **Facilitator** – oversees processes and efforts to help generate ideas, develop solutions and pursue partnerships to achieve Council/Board goals
- **Spokesperson** – represent the Board/Council to the public and other agencies with decisions and strategies that it has approved
- **Intermediary** – liaises with the Chief Administrative Officer (CAO) to provide them with political advice and keep informed on matters that may be of interest to the Board/Council
- **Mentor** – guide Board and Council members to fulfill their roles and provide feedback on behaviours that reduce personal or the organization’s effectiveness.

**What CEO responsibilities may conflict with those of a Board Member/Councilor?**

Responsibility	Mayor/Chairperson	Bd. Member/Councillor

## ADMINISTRATIVE REALM

Staff or 'administration' helps the Board/Council to be effective in its three key roles of making policy, setting direction and representing the public by:

- **Giving policy advice** by assembling information and options for the Board/Council to make decisions that fall within its delegated powers.
- **Implementing directions** by organizing resources to implement strategies, perform tasks and deliver services in accordance with the Board/Council's expectations.
- **Reflecting a body of knowledge** through their training, education and /or experience for a specific civic function or service.

Administration's **giving policy advice** role involves:

- **Providing information** for the Council/Board to make decisions and create policies. Provide information and conduct research for further information for the Board/Council.
- **Clarifying expectations** so that research is focused. Both the Board/Council and CAO need to describe the information required in staff report.
- **Providing options** so that the Board/Council can consider and debate alternatives. Providing a recommendation along with other options.
- **Ensuring compliance** with legislation, policies and municipal case law. The Board and Council rely on administration to review legislative implications of pending decisions.
- **Indicating implementation requirements** by determining the funds and staff required. The Board/Council should know the impact of the decision on the organization's capacity.

The **implementing directions** role of administration includes responsibilities such as:

- **Providing data and information** so that Board/Council can understand external and internal factors rather than just sentiment to develop strategic directions.
- **Developing action plans** to determine the activities required to implement Board/Council directions and deliver services.
- **Allocating resources** to ensure materials and staff are in place. The Board/Council approves an overall budget; administration implements Board/Council directions.
- **Reporting on progress** to provide regular reports on activities and results. This also gives Board/Council confidence that administration is doing what it wishes.
- **Assessing performance** to ensure the operations are getting value for money. Board/Council concerns or performance should direct them to the CAO.

**Reflecting a body of knowledge** or providing expertise role involves:

- **Ensuring relevance** by providing administrative rather than political advice. The role of staff is to provide facts, data and evidence regarding a matter.
- **Being objective** is a 'must have' characteristic for administration. That is not to say that a staff person should not have a recommendation to offer the Board/Council.
- **Being thorough** is subjective. There are volumes of information, staff only has so much time, and elected officials have limited time to review staff reports.
- **Being resourceful** by developing and maintaining a knowledge network. Staff should be encouraged to have peers and resources people that they can access.
- **Staying current** on new trends and information that affect their function. Learning must be considered a life-long venture for each staff person.

## CHIEF ADMINISTRATIVE OFFICER (CAO)

The CAO's responsibilities associated with the Board/Council's roles include:

- **Making policy** – plays a pivotal role in making sure the Board/Council has adequate information to have a good debate and make effective decisions.
- **Setting direction** – the CAO acts a conduit for both the development and implementation of Board/Council directions.
- **Representing the public interest** – while the CAO is not expected to be political, but they are, by virtue of their position, a confidante to the Board/Council.

The CAO's **responsibilities** associated with administration's roles include:

- **Giving policy advice** – the CAO, in addition to screening recommendations going to the Board/Council, also guides staff in the preparation of staff reports.
- **Implementing directions** – the CAO is responsible for all operational matters. Services and programs are expected to be on budget and delivered efficiently.
- **Reflecting a body of knowledge** – the CAO is not an expert in all aspects of municipal operations, but to be able to obtain the required knowledge.

## THE NOTION OF ROLE SEPARATION

<i><b>POLITICAL</b></i>	
<u><b>CEO</b></u>	<u><b>BOARD/COUNCIL</b></u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Oversee governance activities</li> <li>◆ Represent the Council/Board</li> <li>◆ The interface</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Give strategic direction</li> <li>◆ Make policy decisions</li> <li>◆ Reflect the public interest</li> </ul>
<u><b>CAO</b></u>	<u><b>ADMINISTRATION</b></u>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Oversee operations</li> <li>◆ Coordinate resources</li> <li>◆ The interface</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>◆ Implement directions</li> <li>◆ Prepare policy advice</li> <li>◆ Technical knowledge</li> </ul>

***ADMINISTRATIVE***

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# 2.0 The REALITY

## THE REALITY OF ROLE OVERLAP

The notion that these are distinct and separate roles – or ‘black and white’ is called the role separation or the ‘dichotomy model’. (*Dichotomy means “a separation into two divisions that differ widely from each other”.*) The administrative sphere is shielded from political interference to ensure efficient services. The Board/Council, in the political sphere, is responsible for interpreting the public interest into strategic direction and policy.

This notion is false. Administration often enters the political realm by:

- **assisting the Board/Council** to deal with complex community issues.
- **offering policy advice** thereby entering into the policy making process.
- **advocating values** that encroach on the Board/Council’s public interest role.

At the same, the Board/Council or its members often venture into the administrative realm by:

- **getting into details** or procedures of how a policy will be implemented.
- **conveying citizen complaints** concerning service delivery.
- **conducting personal research** thereby undertaking the work of staff.

Without rules of engagement, role confusion can cause:

- **poor communications** so organizational members are not sure who does what.
- **poor organizational performance** because energy is being diverted.

The balance of this material focuses on **collaborative civic leadership**. There needs to be recognition of the distinct or ‘black & white’ roles of the Board/Council and administration while acknowledging the ‘grey’ areas of the political/administrative interface.

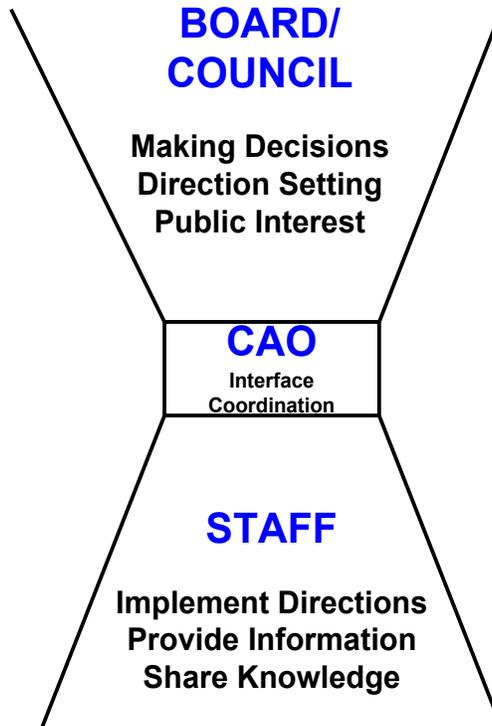
## The CAO HOURGLASS

An hourglass portrays the CAO position as the link between the Board/Council and staff. The position of CAO is the link between the politicians and staff. On the one hand, the CAO doesn’t want to constrict the flow of information so much that there is no interaction. At the same time, there is only one person, the CAO, who directs staff. Consequently, it is useful to have and adhere to a protocol to ensure the proper flow of information between the Board/Council and administration:

- an elected official has the right to request public information from senior staff
- they do (CEO too) not have the right to direct any staff person.
- an information request that impacts a staff work program requires CAO approval.
- CAO may seek Board/Council direction concerning an elected official’s request.

The importance of this protocol is to keep elected officials and staff on the same page when it comes to appropriate roles and responsibilities.

# The CAO HOURGLASS



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## LOCAL GOVERNMENT FUNCTIONS

The Local Government Functions Framework depicts the political realm as revolving around the municipality's **strategic direction** and **policy choices**. It portrays **service delivery** and **system coordination** as the primary functions in the administrative realm.

POLITICAL REALM	
<b>Strategic DIRECTION</b>	<b>Policy CHOICES</b>
Vision for Future Organizational Mission Shared Values Long-Term Goals Specific Objectives	Legislative Compliance Budget Allocations Policy Decisions Contract Arrangements Short-Term Priorities
<b>Systems COORDINATION</b>	<b>Service DELIVERY</b>
Personnel Practices Information Systems Financial Accountability Performance Management Communications	Action Plans Production Systems Resource Schedules Delivery Strategies Service Standards

**ADMINISTRATIVE REALM**

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**STRATEGIC DIRECTION** is set by the Board/Council and implemented by staff.

- **Vision** for the future that reflects the aspirations of the community.
- **Mission** that defines the scope of what services and issues will be pursued.
- Long-term **goals** that shape the key areas to achieve the vision.
- Specific **objectives** with measurable benchmarks to realize the goals.
- Shared **values** that describe how the organization will operate.

**POLICY CHOICES** are made by Board/Council while staff make operational decisions

- **Legislative compliance** that activities are within its jurisdiction.
- **Budget allocations** that determine how monies will be spent.
- **Policies** that guide organizational actions and citizen behaviours.
- **Contracts** that define the municipality's obligation to others and vice versa.
- **Short-term priorities** determine which community issues will be pursued.

**SERVICE DELIVERY** is done by staff in accordance with Board/Council expectations.

- **Action plans** developed by supervisors to organize resources.
- **Production systems** that are maintained.
- **Program schedules** make the public aware of municipal services.
- **Delivery strategies** to use maximize service efficiency.
- **Standards** to reconcile available resources and service expectations.

**SYSTEMS COORDINATION** is done by staff to sustain internal harmony.

- **Personnel practices** to ensure a respectful and productive work place.
- **Information systems** for the easy retrieval of records.
- **Financial accountability** to ensure the prudent use of municipal funds.
- **Performance management** to continually seek service excellence.
- **Communications** that keeps everyone informed internally and externally.

## **ROLE COLLABORATION ACTIVITY**

**Purpose** – to discuss responsibilities of the Board/Council and administration

**Process** (use attached worksheet)

1. Identify responsibilities of staff for the assigned core local government function.
2. Identify responsibilities of the Board/Council for the same function.
3. Debrief in larger group:
  - *What factors would cause staff to assume tasks of the Board/Council?*
  - *What factors would cause elected officials to assume tasks of staff?*

# ROLE COLLABORATION WORKSHEET

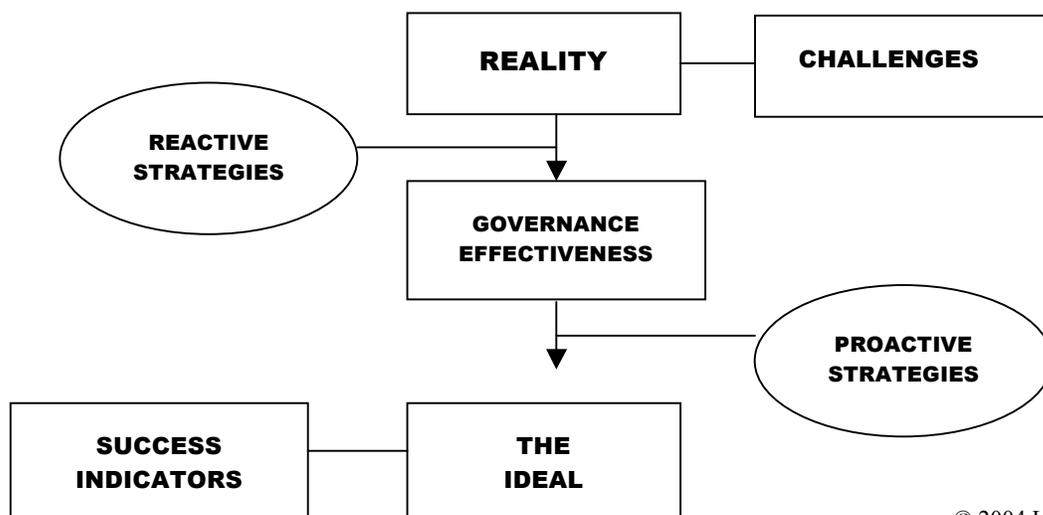
BOARD/COUNCIL Tasks	FUNCTIONS	ADMINISTRATION Tasks
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>STRATEGIC DIRECTION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Vision for the Future</li> <li>• Organizational Mission</li> <li>• Long Term Goals</li> <li>• Specific Objectives</li> <li>• Shared Values</li> </ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>POLICY CHOICES</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Legislative Compliance</li> <li>• Budget Allocations</li> <li>• Policy Decisions</li> <li>• Contractual Arrangements</li> <li>• Short Term Priorities</li> </ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SERVICE DELIVERY</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Action Plans</li> <li>• Production Systems</li> <li>• Resource Schedules</li> <li>• Delivery Strategies</li> <li>• Service Standards</li> </ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>
<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/>	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>SYSTEMS COORDINATION</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Personnel Practices</li> <li>• Information Systems</li> <li>• Financial Accountability</li> <li>• Performance Management</li> <li>• Communications</li> </ul>	<hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <hr/> <p style="text-align: right; font-size: small; margin-top: 10px;">© 2003 LGL INSTITUTE</p>

# 3.0 COLLABORATION

## DEFINING GOVERNANCE SUCCESS

The collaborative approach to political/administrative relations defies absolute roles. In short, the role alignment process is always evolving. Like any relationship, it is handy to have a shared view of success and conduct regular check-ins to make sure the relationship is working even amidst contentious issues, internal challenges and external pressures.

Defining success is essential to the effective political/administrative interface. It involves defining the **ideal** state for good governance in terms of what success look like. Picturing what success looks like establishes criteria to assess the present **reality**. Deliberate actions can then be established as **preventive or remedial strategies** to address gaps or opportunities for good governance. Success indicators are also used to seek **feedback** on a continual basis to bring out the best from the political/administrative interface.



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Both elected officials and staff require success indicators to:

- guide personal behaviour that contributes to good governance.
- offer feedback on activities that inhibit the political/administrative relationship.
- take efforts together to address areas requiring attention.
- assess how things are going on a regular basis.

Success indicators can refer to matters that can be measured such as *how many target dates are met*. They can also include observing whether *everyone is on the same page*. The resulting governance checklist can be used to assess organizational and governance effectiveness, which is the political/administrative relationship.

Two questions to ask when using the governance checklist are:

- **What is Working Well** – celebrate what we do well.
- **Areas for Attention** – determine opportunities for improvement.

## GOOD GOVERNANCE CHECKLIST

1. Adherence to defined political and administrative **roles** and **responsibilities**.
2. Efforts to develop and achieve **strategic directions**.
3. Ability to develop a smooth transition of **plans into action**.
4. Attention to monitor and recognize **organizational** and **staff performance**.
5. Facilitation of a positive and productive **organizational environment**.
6. Accountability for the efficient use of **organizational resources**.
7. Ensure complete information and discussion to arrive at **good decisions**.
8. Consistency of attention to **internal** and **external communication**.
9. Respect for **diverse opinions**.
10. State of organizational stability while addressing **changing conditions** and **issues**.
11. Evaluation of the satisfaction levels and efficiency of **service delivery**.
12. Maintenance of external **relations** and **partnerships**.

## COLLABORATIVE STRATEGIES

A governance check-in itself does not lead to better governance. In fact, conducting an evaluation session without follow-up can lead to more relationship issues. It is important that once some key governance topics have been identified that attentions switch to what can be done to improve effectiveness. The issues need to be understood and desired outcomes established before things get better. Options to achieve success are:

- **Preventive Strategies** – prevent the governance challenge or maximize success
- **Remedial Strategies** – address an issue that has already occurred

## GOVERNANCE STRATEGIES ACTIVITY

**Purpose** – develop strategies to maximize the political/administrative interface

**Process** (use attached worksheet)

1. Select a facilitator, recorder, timekeeper and presenter for this activity.
2. Record the three governance topics that you identified in the last exercise on the 'Collaborative Strategy Worksheet'

### Select one Topic

3. Describe success if the topic was addressed - **desired outcomes**?
4. What are the **negative consequences** of not dealing with the topic?
5. What **preventive strategies** could be used to realize the desired outcomes?
6. What **remedial strategies** could minimize the negative consequences?