

Carolina Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives

Strategic Plan

2005 - 2008

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Introduction

This plan sets forth the strategic direction for the Carolina's Association of Chamber of Commerce Executives (CACCE) for the next three years. It outlines a strategic direction with which the CACCE intends to align all of its activities. Measurable action steps are included in order to track progress.

Background

The CACCE was formed in 1994 as a way of providing professional development and support to the CEO and Presidents of the chambers in the two Carolinas as well as their key staff members. The program offering events are designed to support all sized chamber organizations – small, medium and large.

Mission

An organization's mission describes what it is in business to do. The CACCE's mission is to: **Provide Chamber of Commerce professionals the resources to excel in a rapidly changing environment.**

Vision

A vision describes an organization's ultimate destination. The CACCE's vision is to: **Be the premier organization for leadership development of Chambers of Commerce.**

We will achieve this stature by offering the latest in development programs. Our events and gatherings will be known for their warm, welcoming and friendly environment. The support team for our organization will remain focused and cost effective.

Values

Values represent the desired behavior and benefits of an organization. They are the yardstick against which all major decisions are measured. CACCE's values are to be:

- Focused – we do a few things very well
- Responsive – to the needs of the members
- Value / Quality – provide exceptional value to the members
- Integrity / Professionalism – we do the right things for the right reasons
- Care – about the industry and each other

Strengths

Strengths represent attributes that should be built upon for an organization to be successful in the future. The CACCE counts the following among its strengths:

- Our mission is our strength – we provide professional development services that make chamber executives more effective
- Our programs and services are affordable, accessible and of outstanding quality
- Our members care about the industry and each other; mutually supportive
- Our organization is operated by a professional management organization
- Our (focused) two state territory allows for economies of scale as well as frequent interaction among members
- Our programs provide much needed support for the new and existing chamber executive
- We deliver quality communications to our membership

Weaknesses

Weaknesses are those attributes of an organization that need to be identified and corrected. The CACCE has identified the following as issues to address:

- Membership has nearly reached saturation as virtually all of the chambers in the two states are members; growth in revenue is an issue
- Need to improve our use of technology in terms of routine operation and new product delivery
- Continue to improve our website

Opportunities

- Make the value our members receive obvious to all - High Priority
- Provide affinity programs as a way to increase revenue - Low Priority
- Add a peer review program built upon the chamber re-accreditation process - Low Priority
- Reach out to welcome new chamber executives - High Priority
- Continue to improve the quality and value of our program offerings
- Continue to improve the communication of our product offerings to our members
- Improve the communication of our product offerings to our members
- Increase the amount of useful information provided to our members such as survey results and benchmark research
- Find a way for the members to share resources among themselves - a value for the website
- Consider putting appropriate product offerings on line - a value for our website
- Consider expanding beyond current two state footprint as a way to increase resources, effectiveness and influence while remaining aware of the cost to our members

Threats

- Members may operate their chambers in the traditional fashion in an increasingly non-traditional environment
- A decrease in the relevance of chambers to the next generation of business leaders
- The next generation of business leaders may have different expectations for their chamber membership, focusing more on the return from their investment
- Continued mergers result in fewer companies, fewer leaders and fewer employees to volunteer (absentee management)
- Absentee Management makes it easier to say no to requests for support
- A chamber failing to recognize the fundamental changes that have occurred in our local economies such as the loss of the manufacturing, textile and tobacco jobs
- Special interest organizations challenge continue to challenge the usefulness of chamber membership
- The economy is a constant threat to a chambers' financial stability
- Extremely high expectations from the community for the delivery of new jobs and a strengthened local economy

Objectives

Objective 1. Communications

Strategy 1.1 Newcomer Visitation – Develop an in-person visitation strategy for the new chamber CEO.

Strategy 1.2 Communication Packets – Develop various membership packets describing the CACCE and its offerings. Include the same information on the website.

Strategy 1.3 Improve Member Communication – Send timely, well-written, brief communiqués designed to keep members informed.

Strategy 1.4 Use electronic Medium / Internet – Upgrade the CACCE website; once completed, begin to use electronic medium for routine communication as well as product distribution (i.e., the membership directory, event registration, event calendar posting, etc.) Be aware of how members want to receive their information

Objective 2. Products

Strategy 2.1 Product Review – Reassess the current list of products offered to ensure that each warrants continuation. Ask members how they prefer to have each delivered. Revamp and enhance where and when appropriate.

Strategy 2.2 Survey Benchmark – Conduct a (periodic) survey on topics such as wage and benefit information or budget allocations.

Strategy 2.3 Sharing of Talents – Put a resource list on the CACCE website listing talents and resources that people would be willing to share. More involvement is needed from the membership

Objective 3 Marketing

Strategy 3.1 Comprehensive Marketing Package – Continually re-examine the way we are marketing each and every product / offering. Review how we are positioning the CACCE itself in the market

Strategy 3.2 Vendor Solicitation – Revisit the entire vendor / Sponsor solicitation process periodically and continue to make improvements

Objective 4 Programs

Strategy 4.1 Major Issues – Assemble a series of programs around the major trends in the industry Well suited for the Annual Conference

Strategy 4.2 Meaningful Offerings – Ensure that each program offering is meaningful, timely, focused and delivered in a fashion that meets the needs of members

Strategy 4.3 Professional Sales Training - Bring in a sales training professional to show chamber CEOs and staff the finer points of selling and closing the deal Well suited for the Annual Conference

Milestones for 2006 (to be measured quarterly)

Milestone	Assigned To:	Complete By:	Comments
Develop an in-person visitation strategy for the new chamber CEO			
Develop various membership packets describing CACCE and its offerings. Include the same information on the web.			
Send weekly, well-written, brief communiqués designed to keep members informed.			
Upgrade CACCE's website.			
Reassess the current list of products offered to ensure that each warrants continuation. Ask members how they prefer to have each delivered.			
Consider developing a benefits program for members and their staff.			
Form teams to conduct "best management practices."			
Conduct periodic survey on topics such as wage and benefit information or budget allocations.			
Put a resource list on CACCE's website listing talents and resources that people would be willing to share.			
Determine CACCE's target market including the states, which size chambers, which members of staff, etc.			
Re-examine the way we are marketing every product / offering.			
Form a team of members to personally call those who have not renewed their membership.			
Revisit the entire vendor / sponsor solicitation process.			
Assemble a series of programs around the major trends in the industry.			
Ensure that each program offering is meaningful, timely, focused and delivered in a fashion that meets the needs of members.			
Bring in a sales training professional to show chamber CEOs and staff the fine points of selling and closing the deal.			

Milestone Tracking Report
(sample tracking form)

Milestone	Assigned To:	Project Complete	Comments on Status