

10 TOP TIPS FOR POLITICAL ACUMEN



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Political acumen requires situational knowledge across a diversity of municipal landscapes. However, there are some truths that apply throughout.

- 1 ▶ Integrity:** Maintain integrity in all your actions and support ethical behavior.
- 2 ▶ Roles:** Understanding the boundaries between the roles of Council, the CAO and other Administration helps mitigate the risk that comes with blurred lines.
- 3 ▶ Priorities:** Ensure actions and resources align with Council priorities.
- 4 ▶ Trust:** Establishing trust through the actions you take is a cornerstone of leadership and lays the foundation for political acumen.
- 5 ▶ Respect:** Demonstrate equal respect to political leaders and the decisions they make, as well to staff and the public.
- 6 ▶ Transparency:** Maintain a culture of no surprises and no secrets between you and your Council and Administration.
- 7 ▶ Relationship-Building:** Whether it is with staff, Council, municipal neighbours, the media, or at the provincial or federal levels, relationship-building is critical for achieving your municipality's goals.
- 8 ▶ Neutrality:** Leave the politics to the politicians while Administrators and staff remain neutral on all issues.
- 9 ▶ Communication:** Take the time to listen to Council, Administration leadership, residents and other stakeholders to understand their position and be honest in the information you provide.
- 10 ▶ Feedback:** Ensure mechanisms exist for feedback from/to Council to ensure your actions are aligned with the strategic plans, or seek advice from a mentor or colleague for support in working through challenging situations.

To view CAMA's Political Acumen Toolkit visit politicalacumen.camacam.ca.