



A guide for local chambers of commerce executive search committees

This guide for Minnesota chambers of commerce has been designed to help select your chamber executive and will be a useful tool for any chamber of commerce that is in the process of selecting a new executive within the State of Minnesota. This document was developed to assist chambers as they begin their search for a new staff executive and to help them develop a procedure by which the best qualified candidate will be selected to lead the local chamber.

The Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executives and staff at the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce are poised to assist any local chamber in their selection process. In addition to this handbook, other resources such as guidance for local chamber leaders are available by simply contacting Jennifer Byers at 651-292-4673 or 1-800-821-2230.

NOTE: This is not a comprehensive or timeless legal document and is intended for general informational purposes only. This document is not legal advice or a legal opinion, and it may not necessarily reflect the most current legal developments. Specific details of your hiring activities may vary, laws change, and court cases are decided. Local chambers of commerce should consult their own legal counsel if they are seeking legal advice.

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Who can assist?

A variety of organizations within Minnesota and elsewhere can provide assistance to your chamber of commerce when going through a search process. Some organizations can provide one-on-one counseling and others may provide referral of candidates available.

Additionally, chambers in Minnesota through the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executives have pledged to assist whenever possible other local chambers in the selection process. Sometimes your best advice and assistance can be provided by another local chamber of commerce somewhere in Minnesota, so your first point of contact should be MCCE and the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce.

Helpful organizations include:

Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executives (MCCE) & the Minnesota Chamber of Commerce

400 Robert Street North
Suite 1500
St. Paul, MN 55101
(651) 292-4673 or 1-800- 821-2230
Contact: Jennifer Byers

MCCE can provide guidance to the search committee and in some cases, recommend candidates. The job posting can be emailed to MCCE members and posted on the MCCE website.

Office of Chamber of Commerce Relations U.S. Chamber of Commerce -Midwest Region

11010 Prairie Lakes Drive
Suite 125
Minneapolis, MN 55344
(952) 832-9151
Contact: John Kirchner

The US Chamber of Commerce may be able to provide names of potential candidates.

American Chamber of Commerce Executives (ACCE)

1330 Braddock Place, Suite 300
Alexandria, VA 22314
(703) 998-0072

ACCE is a national chamber professional association which provides assistance on national searches. ACCE can also post job openings on its website.

Dowell Management

380 Jackson Street
Suite 287
St. Paul, MN 55101
651-221-0850
Contact: Larry Dowell

Dowell Management is a consulting firm that specializes in executive search for chambers of commerce.

You may also choose to consult a local executive search firm.

Adopting a Procedure

The selection of your chief staff executive is the single most important decision of your Board of Directors. The right chief staff executive is vital to the success of your chamber's business plan. Without leadership, you cannot accomplish your goals and objectives. As you look for your new chief staff executive, you should keep in mind that successful programs are dependent on a unity of purpose and a compatible relationship between your volunteer and professional leadership.

Determine Goals

Determine or confirm the mission and objectives of your organization. Agreement on these goals and priorities will help in developing criteria for selection of a chief staff executive. (Assistance in goal setting is available through many of the groups listed on page four.)

Determine a Selection Committee

The Board must determine a selection procedure and put it in writing.

Appoint a Selection Committee

The Board must appoint a Selection Committee to review applications as well as screen and interview applicants. Often the current and/or incoming board chair serves on the committee.

Selection Committee meets with Board

The Selection Committee should meet with the Board to discuss and obtain agreement and authority, where needed, on:

- Focus of the chamber and its fundamental needs.
- A job description for the position.
- Key qualifications needed to help accomplish the organization's mission.
- Resources available to the committee to conduct the search.
- Conditions of employment (salary, benefits, etc.).
- Budget for the selection process (travel expenses for those interviewed).
- Number of applicants for final review.
- A timeline.

Work at your own speed. Don't allow yourself to become pressured. It is an important decision.

Committee Seeks Candidates

Complete the "Notice of Job Opening" form (or similar) and submit it to the organizations listed earlier. Also use this as the basis of any local/regional advertising you choose to do.

Committee Selects Candidates

As soon as the Selection Committee receives the names of candidates, it should list them and then select those it wants to consider. Committee members may also divide the list and telephone the candidates. It should record pertinent information on the candidates as it is available.

All suggestions and nominations of candidates should go to the Selection Committee. Candidates who are well qualified for positions as chamber executives do not usually job hunt. Many will seek a position at another chamber only when invited to do so by that chamber's Board or when referred by a reliable source. Public announcement of a vacancy and of the chamber's interest in qualified applicants assures the prospective candidate of acting within the scope of professional ethics in applying for the job.

Chamber Contacts Candidates and Obtains Information

When all resumes are received, the chamber's Chair of the Board and Selection Committee should contact the applicants and request additional data, if needed.

Selection Committee Considers Resumes

The Selection Committee should carefully review the resumes and performance records of all candidates.

- Review resumes and analyze other submitted materials.
- Transfer information to a comparative chart so you can easily evaluate and compare candidates.
- Select candidates you want to interview. Consider especially experience and geography.
- Arrange an interview schedule.
- Agree on interview guide and format.

As soon as you receive applications, start screening the candidates. This is a time-consuming process. Start well in advance of the deadline for selecting the staff executive.

Evaluate the applications based on the job requirements established by the Board. Eliminate candidates who don't meet the minimum requirements.

Selection Committee Interviews Candidates

The Selection Committee should interview the top candidates. Sometimes preliminary phone interviews are conducted, particularly if the candidate is out of state. The same interview guide and format should be used to ensure all candidates are considered equally.

Selection Committee Checks References

The Selection Committee should carefully check references of the top candidates. They may have letters of recommendation from former employers, associates, and friends. In addition to reviewing such references, the Selection Committee or the Board may contact others by letter or telephone or make personal visits to business and organization leaders in the community in which the candidate works. If you plan to contact leaders in the candidates current community of employment, please make sure the candidate is aware you are doing so.

Selection Committee Identifies Final Candidates

The Selection Committee should choose the final candidates. As in the case of the first interviews, the chamber should consider paying the expenses of those traveling to the area for an interview. The interviews are in strict confidence. Unfortunate incidents have occurred where executives were embarrassed in their own communities by press releases announcing they were candidates for a position in another community.

Evaluate Finalists

The committee or Board of Directors should evaluate the finalists. Even when a Selection Committee screens applications and conducts interviews, the full Board has responsibility for selecting the executive. Judge whether the Selection Committee alone has the trust and support of the full Board to make a final recommendation.

Evaluating the competency and qualifications of applicants through brief interviews is often a difficult task.

These selected comments, collected from past experience, will help the Board in evaluating candidates. It is, however, difficult to generalize on problems containing so many complex and varied factors as the employment of a chamber executive. Interpret the suggestions in light of local conditions and in balance with other considerations.

"Don't expect to hire a top-grade chamber executive at a low-grade salary."
"Don't underrate the importance of chamber management and staff experience."
"Don't expect a candidate with a mediocre record in other lines of work to be a superior chamber executive."
"Don't overestimate the value of employing a 'home town person' because he or she knows the town and the important people in it."
"Don't look for a person to take over the policy making and leadership responsibilities of officers, directors, and committee chairpersons."
"Don't overrate a candidate who has a ready-made program to offer."
"Don't seek a person to keep the chamber out of trouble by steering around difficult or controversial problems."
"Don't be over impressed with a candidate who seems to know all the answers without getting all the facts."
"Don't overrate the candidate who promises to keep important members happy by catering to their personal whim."
"Don't sell your community short by seeking a chamber executive to match mediocre chamber achievement in the past."

Board Selects the New Executive

The Board of Directors will select the new chamber executive. It will also confirm the conditions of employment in writing and will agree to a starting date, salary, benefits and moving arrangements.

A unanimous selection by the Board is good member and public relations. It increases the prospect of a harmonious relationship between the Board and the Chief staff executive. It also strengthens the chamber and community members' confidence in the Board and chamber staff.

Most chambers will draw up a special agreement or contract between the Board and the new chief staff executive.

In addition to specifying the salary of the chief staff executive, any agreement should cover:

- Payment of moving expenses.
- Amount of vacation time.
- Amount of travel expenses.
- Professional development budget.
- Benefits such as health care, dental, retirement, etc.
- Car allowance, lease arrangements or mileage payment.

Board Notifies Candidates

As soon as the Board selects the new staff executive, and the candidate accepts, they should notify each candidate interviewed for the position.

This courtesy is usually extended by a confidential letter from the chamber Chair of the Board or Selection Committee chair. It should contain appropriate comments on the qualifications of the candidate who was selected as well as an expression of sincere appreciation.

Develop a plan for introducing the new executive to the membership and the community.

SELECTION COMMITTEE SCHEDULE WORKSHEET

Complete By

First Week

Appoint Selection Committee & Chairman
Contact Sources for Assistance
Develop Qualifications Criteria
Job Description
Salary Range
Set Target Date

Second Week

Submit Notice of Job Opening
Prepare Descriptive Material on
Organization and Community

Third Week

Begin Assembling Possible Candidates Lists

Fourth Week

Preliminary Screening of Candidates
Letters to Potential Candidates

Fifth Week

Set Deadline for Return of Resumes

Sixth/Seventh Week

Build File on Each Candidate
Reference Checks
Invitations for Interviews

Eighth/Ninth Week

Interviews

Tenth Week

Final Selection or Second Interviews
Recommendations to Board
Board Action on Recommended Candidate
Target Date for Filling
Notification of Action to Other Candidates
Public Announcement
Reception

NOTICE OF JOB OPENING WORKSHEET

Title: _____ Date: _____

Organization: _____ Deadline for resumes: _____

City: _____

State: _____ Zip: _____

Income of Organization: Dues \$ _____
 Other \$ _____
 Total \$ _____

Population: Of city _____
 Of area _____

Number of employees: _____

Total Payroll: _____

Qualifications

Brief Profile: (Attach job description and check items on back.)

Experience: Years with Chamber or Assoc. _____ Years of Institute: _____
 Or Previous Employer _____

Education: High School: _____ 2 or 4 year degree: _____

 Master's Degree: _____ Other: _____

Salary and Benefits:

Salary range: _____ Maximum: _____

Benefits: (Please check)

Retirement Program: _____ Salary Continuation: _____ Auto Allowance: _____

Health Insurance: _____ Civic Club Membership: _____ Expense Account: _____

Life Insurance: _____ Auto: _____ Club Membership: _____

Other: _____

Contact:

Name _____ Title _____

Company _____ Phone _____

Email _____

Action Requested

Yes No

- Publicize at once.
- Keep confidential until _____
- Send names and addresses for contact by committee.
- Have interested persons send resume and supporting material.

Remarks:

If you would like copies of this form sent to other sources, please check:

- All sources
- Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executives
- ACCE (American Chamber of Commerce Executives)
- Minnesota Chamber of Commerce
- U.S. Chamber
- Other

Prepared by Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executives with acknowledgement to the U.S. Chamber of Commerce for their assistance.

Evaluating the Candidates Qualifications

Many chamber of commerce officers and directors are experienced in employing people for management positions in their own companies. This experience helps them to evaluate the qualifications of applicants for the chamber's chief staff position.

While the principal purpose of this section is to help you understand the type of executive you need, it will also help you clarify the basic differences between voluntary organization management and business management responsibilities. A thorough understanding of these differences will not only help you select a well-qualified chamber executive, but will also help you maintain smooth and effective relations with Board members.

Work Experience

- Previous experience in working and dealing with people in such fields like public relations.
- Newspaper, media relations or advertising experience.
- Management, personnel or industrial relations experience.
- Sales, sales management or merchandising experience.
- Experience on staff of large chamber or as president of small chamber.

Education and Training

- College or other post-secondary training.
- Participation in extracurricular education activities.
- Institute for Organization Management training in chamber management.
- Leadership (including holding office, serving on committees, making speeches) in chamber executive groups.

Aptitudes and Abilities

- Planning & Organization
- Financial Management
- Communication Skills
- High energy and commitment level.
- Desire to improve.
- Breadth of vision.

Personality Traits

- Integrity.
- Willingness to work.
- Initiative.
- Adaptability
- Warmth and friendliness.
- Enthusiasm.
- Modesty.

Interviewing the Candidates

Careful planning of the interviews by a member of the chamber's Selection Committee will overcome some of the difficulties in evaluating the qualifications of candidates. Experts agree that an ideal employment interview should fall between the extremes of interrogation and conversation. The more completely the interviewer obtains the applicant's confidence, the more likely the applicant will reveal significant facts about himself/herself and his/her experiences. This will help the interviewer more accurately evaluate the applicant's qualifications for the position.

Provide the Appropriate Physical Surroundings

The atmosphere (physical surroundings) in which the interview takes place is important in getting the applicant to talk freely. Hold interviews in a private room. Don't permit interruptions. The room should be informal. Do not establish a schedule that has candidates meeting each other. This embarrassing situation helps no one.

Put the Applicant at Ease

Almost every applicant experiences a certain amount of nervousness or tension at the beginning of an interview. The interviewer is responsible for relieving this tension. After two or three minutes of casual conversation, the applicant will probably talk freely and naturally. You can now easily direct the conversation to important areas. The interviewer should make an effort to limit note taking. When he or she finds such notes necessary, he or she should make certain that they include only impersonal facts.

The Pattern of the Interview

A discussion of the applicant's work experience is a logical starting point for the interview. Education and training are also impersonal subjects which the applicant can discuss easily and freely.

By this time, the applicant should see that the interviewer is making a sincere effort to evaluate his/ her qualifications. This will encourage him/her to talk more freely about his/her aptitudes and abilities. This portion of the interview is the most revealing. The interviewer must tactfully and carefully guide this part of the interview in order to provide a fair and objective appraisal of the applicant's qualifications and appropriateness for the job. Generally speaking, the less the interviewer talks the more successful the interview.

You may find these suggestions helpful:

- Encourage the applicant to talk freely by occasionally indicating approval. For example, comment on the applicant's work by saying, "I can see how that experience was helpful to you."
- Avoid sharp or barbed questions that might put the applicant on the defensive.
- Avoid leading or suggestive questions - questions that are heavily weighted toward a particular answer, or that are answered with "yes" or "no". For example, don't ask, "Did you like that job?" Instead, ask "What did you like about that job?" or "What experience did you get from that job?" Other good questions include "What was the most promising job you ever had?" "What did you like least about that job?" "What types of people do you work best with?"
- Don't rush the interview. Just getting the facts is not enough. Many significant remarks will come spontaneously if the applicant is given time to talk.
- At the end of the interview, listen carefully to the applicant's remarks. He or she will often reveal more about his/her background and personality once he/she feels the formal interview is over.

INTERVIEW GUIDE WORKSHEET

Work Experience

Duties	What did the applicant do on each job? Duties similar to chamber management work?
Likes/Dislikes	What did the applicant like about each job? What did the applicant dislike?
Management Experience	Job closely supervised? Amount of responsibility?
Work Pressure	Ability to manage multiple projects simultaneously? Volume of detail? Long hours occasionally? Some evening work?
Level of Earnings	In line with chamber pay? Goal for next few years?
Stability	How many jobs? Why changes? How long does applicant expect to stay on job?

Education and Training

College/Other post-secondary	Graduate? Best and worst subjects? Extracurricular activities?
Organization Activity	Civic, service, fraternal, or other groups?
Institute for Organizational Management	Attend Institute for Organization Management? Other leadership programs?
Leadership Experience	Held office in organizations?

Aptitudes and Abilities

Planning and Organizing	Ever work with a budget? Understand committee organization?
Detail Work	Like or dislike details? Able to stay on top of detail work?
Writing	Strong writing skills
Speaking	Public speaking experience?

PRESIDENT/CEO INTERVIEW OUTLINE AND QUESTIONS

Interview Preparation

Define objectives before starting

Even if you think you're an expert interviewer, a "seat-of-the-pants" approach can backfire. Take the time to clearly define what you are looking for as the interviewer.

- Describe the position's duties and the technical knowledge and skills required to do the job.
- Identify success factors: How did previous President/CEO's in this job behave?
- Establish performance expectations: What do you expect this person to accomplish?

Before the Interview

- *Put candidates at ease:* Interviewing can be stressful, so do your best to help candidates relax. Make sure each candidate is greeted and escorted, if necessary, to the interview location. Start with low-key questions.
- *Don't judge on first impressions:* We've all met them- people who don't make a great first impression but end up being great employees. To make sure you don't overlook these diamonds in the rough, withhold judgment until you've had the chance to thoroughly evaluate a candidate's capabilities and potential.

Select questions in advance

Don't rely on the job description and candidate's resume to structure the interview. You'll receive much better information if you carefully pre-select questions that allow you to evaluate whether a candidate has those skills and behaviors you've identified as essential for the job.

- Icebreakers: Icebreakers are used to build rapport and set candidates at ease before beginning the formal interview. Examples:
 - How was your trip?
 - Did you have any trouble finding our office?
 - Before we start, would you like a cup of coffee or glass of ice water?
 - Tell us about yourself
 - What are your impressions of the community?

Traditional Questions:

With these, you can gather general information about a candidate and their skills and experience. Because these questions are asked often, many candidates will have prepared answers to them, so they can be used to help candidates feel at ease in the early stages of an interview. Examples:

- What are your greatest strengths?
- What do you consider your biggest weakness and what are you doing to overcome it?
- Explain your knowledge of the chamber.
- Why do you want to work for us?

Situational Questions:

Ask candidates what they would do in a specific Chamber situation. These questions can help you understand a candidate's thought process. Examples:

- Talk about your Chamber of Commerce philosophy.
- Describe your experience with Business Plans, organizational planning and vision.
- Outline your experience with not-for-profit finances including budgets, monthly statements, etc.
- What's your experience with public policy? Talk about some policy issues you advocated that were successes.
- Explain any background in tourism and how you see tourism as part of a community economic strategy.
- Do you have any experience with economic development? If so, discuss some projects you have been directly involved with.
- Talk about your experiences with workforce development and/or preparation. Do you see the chamber playing a role in this type of initiative and why?
- Explain any experiences you may have with leadership development programs.
- Do you consider yourself a visionary individual? Have any of your visions become a reality?
- Talk about your experience in managing people. What is your leadership style?
- Explain how you would motivate the staff. What types of staff members you would look for as the CEO?
- How would you deal with an irate member and/or community leader?
- If we were to hire you, what is the first thing you would do?
- How do you deal with stress on the job?

Behavior-Based Questions:

These require candidates to share a specific example from their past experience. Each complete answer from a candidate should be in the form of a SAR response- the complete Situation, Action, and Result. If a candidate skips any of these three elements, prompt them to fill in the blanks. Examples:

- Tell me about a crisis you could have prevented. Did you do anything differently after the crisis had passed?
- Tell me how you resolve crises by deploying your team members. Give me a specific example.
- Crises usually require us to act quickly. In retrospect, how would you have handled a recent crisis differently, if you had been given more time to think before acting?

Culture-Fit Questions: These will help you select candidates who are motivated and suited to perform well in the unique environment of your organization. Examples:

- What gave you the greatest feeling of achievement in your last job? Why was this so satisfying?
- Why did you choose this type of work?
- What motivates you to work hard? Give me some examples.

During the Interview

Tell the candidate a little about the job/Create a Positive Image for Your Organization: While you don't want to dominate the interview time, you should start with a brief summary of the position, including the prime responsibilities, reporting structure, key challenges, and performance criteria. This will help the candidate provide relevant examples and responses.

Don't be afraid to improvise: Plan your questions, but don't feel you must ask only those you've chosen in advance.

Listen: If you are doing most of the talking during an interview, you will not be able to obtain enough information to distinguish between candidates or to determine a candidate's true competencies. A general guideline is to spend 80 percent of your time listening and only 20 percent talking.

Take notes: While you won't want to transcribe everything the candidate says, do write down important points, key accomplishments, good examples, and other information that will help you remember and fairly evaluate each candidate. An interview guide, prepared in advance, will make note-taking easier and give you a structure for capturing key information.

Invite candidates to ask questions: This can be the most valuable part of the interview. Why do they want to be here- is it the challenge of the job, advances in the industry, or something specific about your company? Or is the candidate fixated on salary, benefits, and time off? If the candidate has no questions this should be a red flag, especially for senior-level employees. Make a note of what the candidate asks, and be sure to follow up if you can't provide the answer immediately.

Follow legal interviewing guidelines: It is critically important that every interviewer understand and follow legal hiring guidelines. The easiest way to keep your interviews fully compliant is to ask only questions that relate to the job, eliminating the potential for bias by not introducing questions or scenarios that will elicit irrelevant information.

After the Interview

Let candidates know what they can expect: A pet peeve of many job seekers is that they are left "hanging" after an interview, or they are promised follow-up that never comes. If the candidate is a good fit, be clear about what the next steps will be. And if the candidate is not a good fit still end on a positive note.

Compare notes and reach consensus: The post-interview evaluation is the time to compare notes and advance the hiring decision. Each interviewer should be prepared to back up remarks and recommendations with specific examples and notes from the interview.

Deepen the questions as you narrow the field: Subsequent interviews with finalists are valuable opportunities to learn more about them. Consider adding "show me" exercises such as a strategic planning exercise or a "walk me through what you'd do" activity involving a real business challenge the individual would be facing.

What questions should employers NOT ask during job interviews?

Generally, an employer may not ask questions that will make the applicant give answers about his/her protected class. Protected classes covered by the Minnesota Human Rights Act include race, color, creed, religion, national origin, sex (including pregnancy), marital status, disability, public assistance, age, sexual orientation and local human rights commission activity.

Interview questions should focus on education, training and skills that are **required** for the position. If the job requires specific needs for age, physical ability, or other things, then the employer may ask about those specific things, for example, "the job requires lifting up to 30 pounds several times a day, can you do this with or without reasonable accommodation?"

Here are the kinds of questions to avoid:

- Do you benefit from any social services? (public assistance)
- You speak with an accent. Where are you from? (National origin and/or race).
- When did you graduate? (Age).
- Do you have a disability? How did you become disabled? (Disability)
- Are you married? What does your spouse do? What is your maiden name? How many children do you have/plan to have? (Marital status).
- Are you pregnant? (pregnancy is covered under sex)
- How will you manage child care if you accept this job? (pregnancy (sex)/marital status)
- How well do you perform under stress? (Disability)
- Are you on any medications? Do you have a medical condition? (Disability)
- Are you a faithful Christian/Muslim/Jew/Hindi? (Religion)
- Have you ever collected worker's compensation? (Disability)

The Minnesota Department of Human Rights has helpful resources on their website at <https://mn.gov/mdhr/employers/hiring-and-interviewing/>

How to Deal with Information that is volunteered

Despite your careful preparation and question selection, some candidates will volunteer information that you would prefer not to know. The best way to handle this situation is not to pursue it or to make note of it. You can't erase the information from your memory, but you can eliminate it as a discussion point and selection factor.

Consistency Equals Fairness

Carefully planned questions and a structured interview process that is the same for all candidates will ensure equal treatment of all who apply. Keep the focus on what the job requires and how each candidate has performed in the past.

MOST COMMON INTERVIEW MISTAKES

First Impressions	Careful of making judgements too soon. Superficial impressions formed early can get you into trouble.
Talking Too Much	In the beginning, the interviewee should talk 75% of the time. In the end, a really good interview turns into a "conversation."
Asking "What If" Questions	Hypothetical questions lead to theoretical answers. Someone can be good on theory and poor in performance.
The "Similar to Me" Error	We all have a tendency to want to "hire ourselves". Careful of this bias.
The Competition Error	Evaluating candidates solely in relation to other candidates rather than on how past job performance fits the job requirements.
Playing it Safe	Sometimes it's easy to choose the "adequate-but-safe" candidate rather than to risk a truly exceptional performer who might be slightly off-beat.
The "Halo" Effect	Careful that one trait or fact about the candidate doesn't overshadow all the rest. Remember that it's the whole package that counts. (Caveat: Sometimes the overshadowing trait is so negative you might not be able to get past it. Trust your gut.)
False Assumptions	Know your own biases and pay attention to them.
Stereotyping	Careful not to put a candidate into a group and then attribute all the traits of that group to the individual.

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Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executives

COMPENSATION

If the search committee is seeking data to set or revise a compensation and benefit plan, a comp and benefit survey of Midwestern chambers of commerce is conducted every two years by the Mid America Chamber Executives (MACE). That data can be obtained by contacting Jennifer Byers at MCCE at jbyers@mnchamber.com.

Model Benefit Plan for Chambers of Commerce

Local chambers of commerce, just like their private sector members, must offer a competitive wage and benefit package to retain and attract talent. As the leader of the local business community, it is imperative that the Chamber benefit package be on par with leading employers in the community. Following is a recommended benefit package, based in part on survey data from the Mid America Chamber Executives survey.

“Must Haves”

- **Medical Insurance:** The Chamber must provide medical insurance for the chief paid executive and staff. Even if the staff member chooses not to participate in a plan, it should remain in the budget for future staff. The Chamber may choose to pay a portion of a small business plan premium or provide a stipend for the purchase of an individual policy.
- **Dental Insurance:**
- **Long Term Disability:** An insurance policy may be purchased.
- **Short Term Disability:** Often self-funded by the organization.
- **Paid Time Off:** Allotted time off, often negotiated to allow for paid time off for vacations, sick or family care.
- **Continuing Education:** Some funds budgeted for continuing education for the staff which should include participation in Minnesota Chamber of Commerce Executives conferences, and as the budget allows, Institute for Organization Management .
- **Expense Reimbursement:** Reimbursement for mileage, member meetings and other related work expenses.
- **Retirement Plan:** Again, whether a qualified retirement plan, life insurance or a stipend for contributions to an IRA or similar investment, some funds should be set aside for retirement investments.

“Nice to Have”

- **Cafeteria Plan Reimbursement**
- **Health Savings Account**
- **Mobile phone reimbursement**
- **Civic or social club membership**
- **Bonus Plan**

Providing Relocation Assistance

In larger organizations, Chambers generally acknowledge the extraordinary costs of moving an executive from one geographic area to another by providing a number of special forms of assistance. They may include:

- Moving Expenses
- House-Hunting Expenses
- House-Selling Assistance
- Mortgage Assistance
- Closing Costs
- Temporary Living Expenses
- Incidental Expenses
- Travel
- Tax Assistance (relating to moving reimbursements)

**The chamber does not necessarily pay each of the costs mentioned above. It does try to design, a moving package that best fits the new executive's needs.*

Developing an Employment Agreement

Some Chambers find the drafting of executive employment agreement one of their most difficult assignments. The document itself is not difficult to write. It contains certain standard provisions and the major terms must be detailed, clear and unambiguous. It's that basic. The major problem is in drafting the agreement. It involves the negotiation of terms between the chamber executive and the chamber Board of Directors, Executive Committee or other groups charged with representing the organization's interest. Not all chambers utilize former employment agreements. Many simply outline the employment package at starting date.

Items Included in Executive Employment Agreements

- Names of parties to agreement
- Terms of employment and compensation
- Extension
- Working facilities
- Termination and dismissal
- Deferred compensation
- Disability
- Restrictive covenants
- Employee as consultant
- Default
- Total disability defined
- Expense reimbursement
- Vacations
- Health and accident insurance
- Life insurance
- Personnel hiring
- Automobile/Allowance/mileage
- Bonus provisions
- Training/Institute, etc.

Appendix

Glossary of Behavioral Traits

Effective job performance requires both skills AND behaviors appropriate to the particular position. This glossary can help you define the behaviors needed for success.

Ambitious	Strongly desires advancement to position of increased authority and prestige.
Analytical	Thinks logically, isolates the fundamental parts of a complex problem.
Communicates	Speaks clearly, articulately and concisely. Is readily understood by others.
Competitive	Strongly desires to be first and to win.
Conceptual	Thinks in abstract and theoretical terms.
Confident	Approach to new, unfamiliar and difficult situations reveals self-assurance and realistic confidence.
Courage of Convictions	Stands up for beliefs and principles.
Creative	Thinks originally and imaginatively. Conceives new ideas and approaches.
Credible	Readily gains the trust and confidence of others.
Critical Thinker	Probes beneath the surface. Does not accept things at face value.
Decisive	Makes decisions quickly and often without "complete" data.
Deliberate	Thoughtful and hesitant in making decisions. Carefully considers alternatives.
Detail Oriented	Pays careful attention to details.
Diligent	Applies steady, earnest effort to task performance.
Energetic	Works vigorously and actively. Does not tire or fatigue easily.
Engaging	Stimulating; elicits reactions from others.
Enthusiastic	Communicates positive attitudes in an emotionally expressive and vibrant manner. Approaches problem systematically.

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Appendix

Follows Through	Carries activities through to conclusion and endures that projects are completed.
Friendly	Shows a personal interest in others. has a pleasing way of dealing with others.
Good Judgment	Discerns and chooses the best course of action. Effectively blends intelligence, knowledge and people understanding.
Has Drive	Pursues objectives with a high degree of energy and persistence.
Has Perspective	Views things in their relative importance; appreciates the broad picture.
Honest	Behaves sincerely and candidly. Avoids deception.
Initiative	Moves into new areas without being prodded; starts a series of events independently.
Intellectually Curious	Wants to know "why". Shows a thirst for and a keen interest in acquiring knowledge.
Learns Quickly	Readily grasps new ideas and concepts.
Listens Well	Pays close attention when others are speaking actively; tries to understand what's being said.
Mature	Does not allow feelings to distort reasoning. Controls the expression of strong feelings. Does not rationalize failures.
Objective	Reaches conclusions on the basis of facts as opposed to personal feelings and prejudices.
Open Minded	Willingly considers new ideas and approaches not tied to tradition or convention.
Open and Straightforward	Freely states what's on his/her mind. Expresses thoughts and feelings directly and candidly.
Outgoing	Sociable, extroverted, enjoys and seeks out contact with people.
Patient	Maintains composure in the face of delays and barriers.
Perseverant	Behaves objectively in spite of obstacles and discouraging events. Tenacious.
Persuasive	Sells ideas effectively. Overcomes objections.
Plans and organizes	Lays out tasks in logical and orderly sequence. Establishes and follows through on priorities.
Poised	Maintains composure in embarrassing or upsetting situations

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Appendix

Politically Astute	Is shrewd in discerning sources of power and ways of dealing with them.
Practical	Emphasizes action over abstraction. Thinks realistically; rejects the Impractical
Resourceful	Improvises, devises ways to solve difficult problems.
Responsible	Reliable and trustworthy; willing to be held accountable.
Responsive	Reacts promptly to suggestions and requests.
Results Oriented	Is intent upon achieving practical results. Concentrates attention on making things happen.
Risk Taker	Acts without assurance of success. Able and willing to risk failure.
Selects Competent People	Recognizes and appreciates strength and competence. Actively seeks out competent people.
Self-Disciplined	Carries out difficult, unpleasant and unrewarding tasks without procrastination.
Sensitive	Shows appreciation for and understanding of others.
Set a Fast Pace	Works quickly; places a premium on speed of action. Shows a strong sense of urgency.
Shows Foresight	Anticipates the future consequences of actions.
Sophisticated	Presents an impressive and dignified appearance and demeanor.
Tactful	Rarely offends people. Expresses views without creating defensiveness.
Tolerates Ambiguity	Copes effectively with complex, vague and disordered situations.
Tough Minded	Unsentimental; able to make decisions detrimental to a few but help to most
Versatile	Applies a wide range of aptitudes, skills, and abilities.
Works Hard	Expends extra effort "above and beyond the call of duty." Makes personal sacrifices for the sake of the job.

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