

## Chief Officer's Toolbox Political Acumen



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### Political Acumen- Definition

- ▶ The interpersonal and political dynamics of any organizations structure and your ability to fit in and facilitate change.
- ▶ The social interaction generally within government and the ability to think clearly, have credibility and make good decisions

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### Political Power

- ▶ Formal – City Council, Board of Supervisors, Fire District Board members, State Elected Officials, CM, CAO
- ▶ Formal – Chief Officers, Company Officers, Union Officials
- ▶ Informal – leaders throughout the organization

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## Skills needed for collaborative teams

### ABILITY TO...

- ▶ frame and sell ideas
- ▶ influence others
- ▶ negotiate and persuade
- ▶ build networks
- ▶ initiate and make changes
- ▶ manage organizational crisis

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## Building Social Capital

- ▶ Develop personal, stable and long term relationships at work, in your profession and in your community
- ▶ Help others to succeed without expectations of reciprocity
- ▶ Become a strong team player
- ▶ Build up your political capital- do what you say your going to do, be honest, don't play games

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## Building Social Capital

- ▶ Build trust and credibility
- ▶ See the world through the eyes of others, listen carefully, understand their motivation
- ▶ Politics is a process, understand the process of governance and how things get done
- ▶ Remember that you're the expert in fire and life safety for your jurisdiction, we work for the community we serve

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## Effecting Change

- ▶ Do you have a plan?
  - General Plan
  - Standards of Cover
  - Financial Plan (major purchases)
  - Yearly Plan
  - Approved Goals and Objectives
  - Division/Battalion/Company Plans

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## Effecting Change

- ▶ Alliances
- ▶ Networks
- ▶ Community Input
- ▶ Best Practices

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## Organizations in Crisis

- ▶ Tend to the basics of your delivery system
- ▶ Determine the issue- the real issue- not the symptoms
- ▶ Develop a plan to fix the issue- collaborate with others to get buy in
- ▶ Gain political support- CA, CM, BOS, CC, Union
- ▶ Work the plan, communicate frequently

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Questions?

*Thank you for the opportunity today*

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## Testing your Political Acumen

### Self -Assessment

	Yes	No	I Need Improvement
Do you understand your governance model?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have credibility with your labor group?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have credibility with your governance structure (your immediate supervisor and your boss's boss? )	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you considered neutrally competent?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do your elected officials know you by name?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you known as a straight shooter?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
If you don't have the answer, do you know who does??	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a community network?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you a team player?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have a plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you have contingencies to your plan?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you considered your communities expert on fire and life safety?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Are you aware of Local, Regional, State and National fire issues?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Do you think before you speak?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Can you see the big picture?	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>