



Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce

STRATEGIC PLAN

The Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce Board of Directors completed a strategic planning process. It is the goal of the Board of Directors to develop and implement strategies to take the organization and community into the next five years. The plan, vision and mission embarked upon serve as a blue print for the programs, services and value the Chamber is creating for its members.

MISSION

The Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce is dedicated to promoting the free enterprise system, providing membership value and enhancing the economic growth of its members and the region.

VISION

- The Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce will be recognized and respected by business and political leaders as a leading partner in economic development and business promotion in this region.
- We will be known as the primary resource for our members on issues affecting large and small businesses in support of a healthy regional economy.
- We will be recognized by our members as providing real values through benefits in support of their business development.

I. Mid-Maine Chamber's Organizational Structure and Resources

GOAL: To optimize the Mid-Maine Chamber's organizational and volunteer structures in order to adjust to the changing needs of its members.

STRATEGY #1: Ensure effective, productive and successful employees.

TACTICS:

1. To construct, implement and document formal orientation/training of new employees.
2. To conduct timely evaluations based on complete and up-to-date Chamber staff job descriptions. To develop and implement a 3 month review for new hires.
3. To document all corrective actions; each corrective action must include a stated plan of action and consequence for non-compliance.
4. The Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce president will encourage open, honest and frequent communications with staff by conducting individual monthly staff closed door one-on-one meetings with each member of the Chamber staff.

MEASUREMENTS: Human resource issues and opportunities will be reviewed monthly by the executive board and will appear as an action item on the monthly agenda.

TIMELINE: Development of a three month review, formal orientation/training of new employees to be completed by December 31, 2007. Use of these processes will be daily and ongoing.

RESPONSIBILITY: President/CEO, chair, and executive board

STRATEGY #2: Board, Volunteer and Committee Development

TACTICS:

1. To formally define committee chair responsibilities by creating a description of responsibilities. This will include the responsibility of recruitment for the committee, orientation of new members and the development of a successor to the chair.
2. Focus on training committee chairs on their responsibilities. Formalize minimum requirements for membership in each committee (attendance and size). Board chair and committee chairs will formalize minimum requirements for committee size and attendance as well as committee member responsibilities.
3. Develop a formal annual program of work for the board of directors. This program of work should be reviewed and worked on at each board meeting and will be the primary focus of the meeting. President's reports will be emailed prior to the meeting.
4. Annual Retreat will include: a review of the annual survey; the Strategic Plan is to be thoroughly reviewed with full board; and a draft program of work for each committee will be prepared for presentation prior to the retreat.
5. The Chamber president and chair (or chair designee) will develop and host a new director orientation prior to the annual directors' luncheon.
6. Develop a strategy each spring/summer at executive board for attracting and developing committee members.

MEASUREMENTS: Each new board member gains a basic understanding of their responsibility as a director. Full Board gains or retains a basic understanding of the Chamber's current strategic plan. Program of work for each committee fully understood by each current and incoming director. Committee chairs and directors meet responsibilities as defined. Progress will be reviewed monthly by the executive board and should appear as an agenda item.

TIMELINE:

1. Draft program of work for each committee prepared for presentation prior to retreat each year.
2. Define committee chair responsibilities by creating a description of responsibilities and formalizing minimum requirements for membership in each committee to be completed by February 2008.
3. Develop a formal annual program of work for the board of directors after October retreat. Changes in

- reporting to be made as of January 2008.
4. Rework the board of director meeting agenda format; these format changes to be made as of December 2007.

RESPONSIBILITY: President/CEO, executive board, program assistant & board of directors & current committee chairs

STRATEGY #3: Facility review

TACTICS:

1. Develop criteria for reviewing possible Chamber locations.
2. Establish a process to develop and solicit opportunities for possible Chamber building relocation.

MEASUREMENTS: Financial documents relating to the viability and opportunity of current and perspective Chamber locations will be reviewed as opportunities arise by the executive board.

TIMELINE: As opportunities are known, a recommendation will be made and presented to the board of directors.

RESPONSIBILITY: President/CEO, executive board, board of directors

STRATEGY #4: By-law review

TACTIC:

1. Formally review and/or amend at least once every five years current by-laws to ensure the viability to the evolving needs of our membership.

MEASUREMENTS: The by-laws to be reviewed and amended based on a continuing analysis of the evolving needs of our membership.

TIMELINE: Recommendations of any amendments to the by-laws will be presented to the full board for vote prior to the board retreat in October.

RESPONSIBILITY: President/CEO, executive board, board of directors

II. Membership

Goal: To develop, implement, and market proactive programs and services that will provide substantial benefits to encourage retention of our current membership and opportunities for membership growth.

STRATEGY #1: Membership growth

TACTICS:

1. Continue to enhance existing benefits and explore better tracking systems for Chamber Gift Certificate and Advantage Discount Cards.
2. Identify a quarterly "hot list" of prospective members.
3. Develop a strategy to meet and follow-up with prospective members to present the benefits of the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce.
4. Make monthly calls to member communities to obtain new business start up information to support these new businesses through the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce.
5. Evaluate membership committee strategy. Provide resources as feasible.
6. Develop a membership growth plan to ensure a 10% membership increase in our published membership number over the next three years beginning in January 2008.

MEASUREMENT: Reach or exceed three year membership goal.

TIMELINE: Three years

RESPONSIBILITY: Membership committee, board of directors, executive board, president and CEO, and office.

STRATEGY #2: Evaluate and enhance benefits packages for all members for retention.

TACTICS:

1. Develop a simple one liner for the question, "What does the Chamber do?"
2. Develop unique benefits for specific segments of our membership.
3. Host a speaker to discuss the benefits and opportunities of being a Chamber member.
4. Work in conjunction with strategy #1 in regards to our current benefits and understanding their value to members. Conduct focus groups with non-members and develop a strategy to attract them to become members.
5. Develop a more effective use of the Forum page on the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce's Web site.

MEASUREMENT: Progress reviewed ongoing through membership growth, retention, and feedback.

TIMELINE: Simple one-liner to be developed within three months. Speaker, segmented benefits, review, enhancement, and development of other benefits will begin immediately as part of membership committee's 2008 Program of Work and will be ongoing.

RESPONSIBILITY: Membership committee, executive board, board of directors, president and CEO.

STRATEGY #3: Improve and increase Chamber awareness in the public eye.

TACTICS:

1. Develop methods to tie the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce name to events in a more “in your face manner.” (i.e. events need to have our name tied to them as well as sponsors).
2. Review opportunities to get involved with and support other events within our membership on an annual basis.

MEASUREMENT: Progress is reviewed monthly through membership growth and retention.

TIMELINE: Ongoing with name recognition. Support of events etc. to be determined during annual budget discussion.

RESPONSIBILITY: All Chamber committees

STRATEGY #4: Strategic Rate Increase Plan

TACTIC:

1. Review financial needs of the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce in conjunction with long term plans for location and other expenses.

MEASUREMENT: Reviewed annually in accordance with budget and goals.

TIMELINE: The rate is to be reviewed each November. The determined rate for the new billing year will be announced each December.

RESPONSIBILITY: Executive board, board of directors, membership committee, president and CEO

III. Financial Stability

GOAL: Strengthen the financial position of the Mid-Maine Chamber for the benefit of our members as described on *II Membership*.

STRATEGY #1: To operate the Chamber with a budgeted surplus of at least 3% of the total gross revenue generated for the year.

TACTICS:

1. On an annual basis the executive board and president/CEO of the chamber will meet and prepare an operating budget that will achieve the required percentage return on revenue as stated in the strategy above.
2. The annual budget will be prepared based on input from the president/CEO goals, the annual board retreat and the past two years of financial reports.

MEASUREMENT: The annual operating budgets submitted to the entire board of directors will be at least 3% of the annual budgeted operating revenue.

TIMELINE: On going on an annual basis to be voted on at the annual directors' luncheon.

RESPONSIBILITY: President/CEO and the executive board

STRATEGY #2: Retain a contingency operating reserve with a minimum of six months operating expense.

TACTIC:

1. On an annual basis the executive board and president/CEO of the chamber will prepare an operating budget that will maintain a fund balance equal to at least six months of operating expense. Any other excess retained earnings shall be board designated.

MEASUREMENT: The contingency fund on the balance sheet is adequately funded as stated above and reviewed by the executive board on a monthly basis.

TIMELINE: On going on a monthly basis and planned annually to be funded in the operating budget as established by the executive board and president/CEO.

RESPONSIBILITY: President/CEO and the executive board

STRATEGY #3: All major fundraising programs shall prepare a budget that produces a minimum contribution margin of fifty percent (50%) of direct costs.

TACTICS:

1. On an annual basis the four major fundraising committees (Awards Dinner, Golf, Taste and Super Raffle) will meet and prepare a budget for their assigned event that will result in at least a fifty percent return on revenue.
2. The executive board and president/CEO of the chamber will review and approve, if accepted, the proposed budget and include it in the annual operating budget.
3. All fundraisers will be reviewed on an annual basis as to whether they should be continued for the following year.

MEASUREMENT: The proposed budget from the committees will meet the fifty percent return on revenue as stated above.

TIMELINE: On going on an annual basis and completed prior to the executive board and president/CEO starting the annual operating budget process.

RESPONSIBILITY: Committee chairs for the awards dinner, golf tournament, Taste of Greater Waterville and the Super Raffle, along with the president/CEO and the executive board.

STRATEGY #4: Establish a five year capital equipment budget to replace old equipment or purchase new equipment as part of the annual budget process.

TACTICS:

1. Prepare a five year capital expenditure budget on an annual basis as part of the budget process.
2. Gather the fixed asset and depreciation schedule from the chamber's accountant. Evaluate the current fixed assets and establish a plan to replace equipment or building as needed
3. The executive board and president/CEO of the Chamber will plan and establish capital expenditure needs for the next five years and update the list on an annual basis.
4. Examine the possibility of a capital campaign to raise funds for a new office building.
5. Define capital asset policy.

MEASUREMENT: The proposed capital budget is included in the budget package for approval at the annual directors' luncheon in December of each year. The annual capital budget will not exceed the amount of depreciation less the principal payments, if applicable.

TIMELINE: On going on an annual basis and completed prior to the executive board and president/CEO starting the annual operating budget process.

RESPONSIBILITY: Committee chairs, office staff, president/CEO and the executive board

IV. Membership Resources and Education

GOAL: To provide information to our members for the purpose of understanding issues.

STRATEGY #1: Education – breakfast series and legislative documents.

TACTICS:

1. Partner with Thomas College to produce and promote business breakfast series no more than ten times annually.
2. Produce and publish legislative document inserts for Chamber's *InTouch* newsletter.
3. Co-host a monthly issues forum during the legislative session.
4. Become a Legislative Advocacy Bridge (liaison between members and politicians).
5. Survey attendees within one week of breakfast.

MEASUREMENT: The results of the breakfasts and forums to be reported to the executive board via president's report and to the board of directors directly by the chair of the public policy committee.

TIMELINE: Ongoing monthly

RESPONSIBILITY: Public policy committee chair, breakfast committee chair and public policy committee

STRATEGY #2: Communication – *InTouch*, *Community Connection* and Web site.

TACTICS:

1. Publish a quality, monthly newsletter to be mailed and posted on the Web site, a minimum of 11 issues per year. Promote and market Chamber activities, programs, membership news, and press releases within the publication.
2. Publish a bi-monthly publication, *Community Connection*, in cooperation with the Morning Sentinel and post to the Chamber's Web site. The publication shall be used to market Chamber activities and promote member sponsorships. Make the public aware that the *Community Connection* is a product of the Mid-Maine Chamber of Commerce. Continue to improve efficiencies in the production of our publications to aid office staff and volunteers.

MEASUREMENT: The results reviewed by executive board and the board of directors; this should be an agenda item at both meetings.

TIMELINE: Ongoing monthly

RESPONSIBILITY: Information services committee

STRATEGY #3: Market region: map and guide, and *Living Better in Mid-Maine* guide

TACTICS:

1. Design, solicit sponsorships for and produce map and guide bi-annually.
2. Design, solicit sponsorships for and produce *Living Better in Mid-Maine* guide bi-annually.

MEASUREMENT: The results reviewed by executive board and the board of directors

TIMELINE: Every other year

RESPONSIBILITY: Program assistant and president/CEO

STRATEGY #4: Facilitation – emails, Web site, meetings and socials.

TACTICS:

1. Explore IT training opportunities for the staff that will benefit their production of our publications.
2. Promote Web site whenever possible.
3. Produce a Business to Business Showcase annually designed to support and assist members' growth and not necessarily a fund-raiser.

MEASUREMENT: The results reported to the executive board via president's report and to the board of directors directly by the chairs of the information, public policy and membership committees.

TIMELINE: Ongoing monthly

RESPONSIBILITY: Information Services committee/Web site, public policy committee/legislative e-mails, staff/all event communications. The chair of each committee will be individually responsible for all communications to their committee.

V. Economic Development

Goal: To support efforts of and provide resources as feasible to economic development organizations that are focused on business attraction and business enhancement.

STRATEGY #1: Promote workforce development in the Mid-Maine Chamber region.

TACTICS:

1. On an ongoing basis, the president/CEO of the Chamber will acquire any and all new releases on workforce data in the Mid-Maine Chamber region.
2. President/CEO will meet with and discuss the interpretation of this information with those organizations responsible for making changes in workforce development, asking how the Chamber can support efforts or provide resources.
3. President/CEO will involve business attraction and retention committee members with ongoing efforts, seeking ideas and solutions for workforce development.

MEASUREMENT: Being part of meetings with organizations whose primary interest is workforce development. Monthly report to Chamber's business attraction and retention committee on new and ongoing developments, while continuously seeking ideas for enhancements. Monthly report to Chamber board on highlights.

TIMELINE: Meetings as scheduled

RESPONSIBILITY: President/CEO, chamber staff and business attraction and retention committee

STRATEGY #2: Partner with organizations or companies focused on business attraction and business development.

TACTICS:

1. President/CEO or a chamber board member designee will identify and serve on boards/committees of organizations whose primary focus is on business attraction or business development in the Mid-Maine Chamber region.
2. The chamber will play a supportive role in providing that organization with resources needed, as feasible, to achieve business attraction/business development endeavors.

MEASUREMENT: Being part of meetings with organizations or companies who are pursuing business attraction/business development endeavors. Monthly report to Chamber's business attraction and retention committee on new and ongoing developments, while continuously seeking ideas for enhancements. Monthly report to Chamber board on highlights.

TIMELINE: Meetings as scheduled

RESPONSIBILITY: President/CEO and business attraction and retention committee