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E241

Strong Chambers for the Future

Jeremy L. Arthur, IOM, CCE

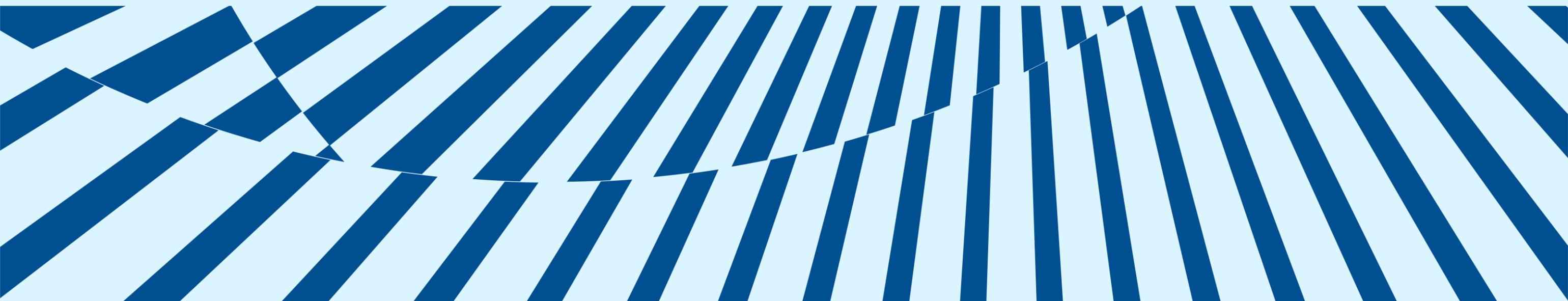
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Disclaimer:

The presentation material covered in the actual class on-site may be slightly different from the version uploaded here.

In an effort to keep the material current and up-to-date, and due to the early submission due date requirement, the material may change slightly prior to class time.

I will provide you with the class-presented version.



HI, I'M JEREMY

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Course Outline

Government regulation, technology, public trust, volunteerism, and a host of other issues affect the relevance and viability of chambers. Become aware of key trends and issues that impact chambers and discuss steps to ensure the future of the chamber industry.





Course Topics

Understanding income, membership, and competitive marketplace trends in the chamber industry.

Identifying shifts in trends to ensure that your organization stays ahead of the curve and delivers member value.

Examining innovative programs, governance, and operating procedures of trailblazing chambers.





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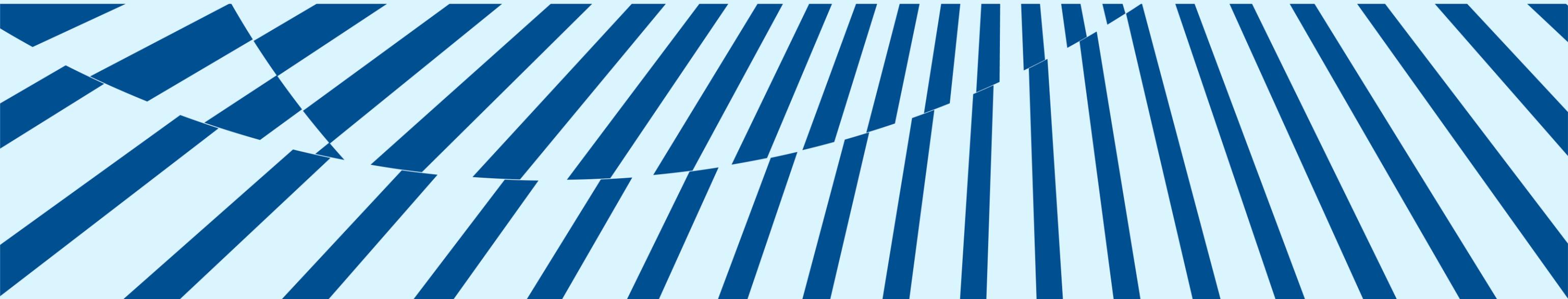
The Future

[Back To The Future Clip](#)

What's Your "DeLorean?"

[Back To The Future Clip](#)

What's Your "Flux Capacitor?"



The Future...

Panic??

CNN Holds Morning Meeting To Decide What Viewers Should Panic About For Rest Of Day

11/07/14 1:11pm • SEE MORE: NEWS ▾



ATLANTA—Kicking around ideas ranging from an uptick in child kidnappings to a new link between laptops and cancer, senior CNN staffers held their regular daily meeting this morning to decide which topic viewers should panic about for the rest of the day. “It’s always kind of tough to get our meetings

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The Future

“Nothing is more responsible for the
‘good old days’ than a bad memory.”

-Franklin Pierce Adams





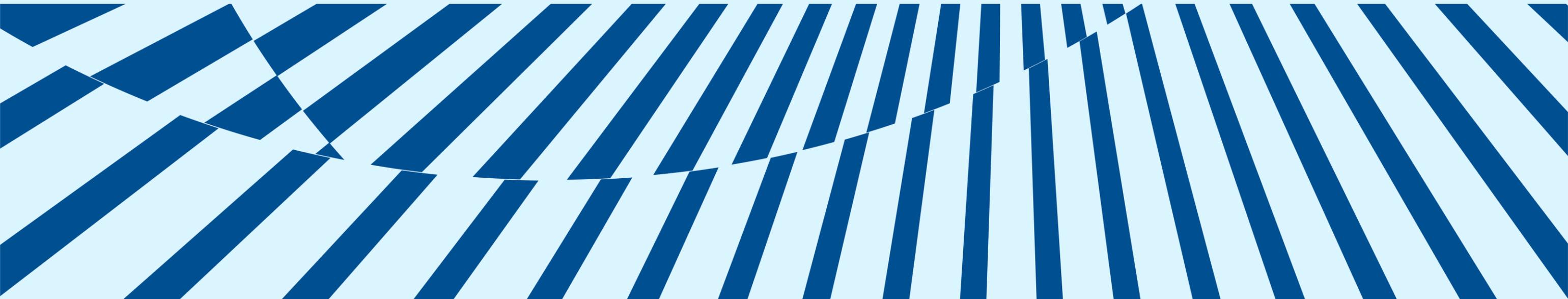
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But First... Back To The Future

Q: My chamber is BEST KNOWN for: (one word)

Text: JEREMYARTHUR702 to 37607

Online: [PollEv.com/jeremyarthur702](https://pollev.com/jeremyarthur702)





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Look around

What would your “community” or “industry” look like if your organization no longer existed?

Q: Describe in ONE word

Text: JEREMYARTHUR702 to 37607

Online: [PollEv.com/jeremyarthur702](https://www.poll-ev.com/jeremyarthur702)





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The Future

Q: My chamber is WELL PREPARED for the FUTURE...

Text: JEREMYARTHUR702 to 37607

Online: [PollEv.com/jeremyarthur702](https://pollev.com/jeremyarthur702)



ACCE Horizon Initiative Chambers: 2025

1. The Nature of Belonging & Gathering
2. Communications and Technology
3. Scarcity and Abundance
4. Global Impacts
5. Population Shift
6. Political and Social Fragmentation
7. Resource Alignment
8. Catalytic Leadership
9. Limitations of Government (added)

<https://acce.org/pages/horizon/>



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Revolution in who engages with chambers and how they engage.

Millennial-phobia is overblown, but membership questions abound.

An audience isn't necessarily a network and every event doesn't necessarily create value.

Belonging &
Gathering - defined



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How do your mission-supporting investors measure their return? (Have you asked them?)

How have their ROI expectations changed over the years?

How will your reporting change to meet new demands?

What measures or progress reporting could you develop to articulate your advocacy efforts on behalf of businesses, the economy and community?

Belonging &
Gathering -
questions



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Technology is unlikely to differentiate chambers, but human support will.

However, supports will expect mass customization, complete connectivity and robust feedback loops.

Communications &
Technology -
defined



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Other than an annual member survey, how could you better collect and analyze feedback from members?

How could you be more deliberate about using the feedback you receive to improve the organization and enhance the member experience?

Since the community at large is one of your “publics,” how could you better gather useable feedback from influential members of the community on a regular basis?

Communications &
Technology -
questions



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On the cusp of unforeseen abundance,
local economies can feel short of water,
energy, talent, land and leadership.

Swings in supply and demand happen
quicker.

Chambers must be nimble problem solvers.

Scarcity &
Abundance -
defined



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How can you break the traditional model for evaluating your regional strengths?

Not all resources are natural – abundance of government-related jobs, transportation infrastructure, viable downtowns, top quartile rated education institutions are all examples. How can you itemize abundant manmade resources and identify the 3 that you need to work on to build bragging rights?

What perceived scarcities in your region can be repositioned to highlight a related abundance? – e.g. shortage of developable greenfield space creates “natural” drive for walkable living of a dense new urbanist community.

Since people and talent are the new inventory for economic development and investment decisions, what aspects of your workforce and talent pool are abundant, but largely unidentified, misunderstood, or exported?

Scarcity & Abundance - questions



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Exports will drive growth.

The world will come to your door.

Strong places will still matter to global companies.

Small-medium companies need exposure and connections to global opportunities.

Global Impacts -
defined



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What steps could you take to better quantify and understand the international connections among your larger active members?

What countries seem to be most connected (as suppliers, customers or investors) to your member businesses?

Who are the “fixers” or partners your members use to connect in other countries? How can you connect with those well-placed experts?

What questions can you include in your routine member visits to ensure that you know whether companies already trade internationally, or whether they want to?

Global Impacts - questions



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Population diversification continues on a national scale.

Millennials (begin to or already have) displace boomers as the workplace majority and bring with them inclusive core values that challenge traditional perceptions of a chamber.

Population Shift -
defined



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Is your chamber addressing:

Workplace (equity of opportunity within companies)

Marketplace (increased markets for minority enterprises and recognition of the buying power of minority populations)

Workforce (increasing minority representation on company and chamber staffs)

Are any of your Board seats occupied by a young person? A minority?

Do your Board meetings inspire anybody, much less younger people or minorities?

How many of your programs you offer to diverse groups were created with input and ownership from those groups?

Do you encourage/discourage staff to engage in business-hour connections to social media?

Is your chamber interested in issues of fairness and quality of life?



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Population Shift - questions

Splintering in politics and society is felt at the local level, not just in DC and statehouses.

Trend is unlikely to reverse, but chambers have an opportunity in the “sane center.”

Political & Social
Fragmentation -
defined



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Does your chamber board room reinforce “sides” or work toward a more “workable” governing model?

Does your chamber act as a convener, and one that can find workable solutions, resource, and political will?

Does your chamber work toward “shared values?”

Does your chamber nurture avenues for understanding and negotiation on major priorities?

Does your chamber consider the “larger context” of issues?

Does your chamber ...

Political & Social Fragmentation - questions



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In the search for revenue beyond the rate card, chambers must tie money to the mission.

Supporters will want progress more than engagement.

Resource Alignment -
defined



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How could you better evaluate and track the motivations of your members?

In the future, will you distinguish sponsorship revenues as “mission supporting” or “direct investor benefit?”

Economic development campaign contributions are usually made in support of the mission, but what ROI will be expected over the duration of the campaign?

Given the relatively low turnout rate for most chamber programs, a \$400 dues payment may very well be an investment in your mission, even if the member is small. How could you better recognize the commitment to community and organization success such members are making?

Resource Alignment - questions



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Local leadership matters more in a diverse and distracted world.

Chambers must get comfortable catalyzing change, not just coping with it.

Catalytic Leadership -
defined



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How will your officer nominations process change to address this need for change-agent, rather than caretaker leadership?

In dealing with the most important (rather than most urgent) issues and changes in your org or business community, persistence is the only way to affect change. What steps can you put in place to maintain and sustain priorities across multiple years, rather than changing direction with each annual work plan?

Given the resistance to institutional hierarchies among future generations, how can you be more intentional and deliberate about building networked leadership across a broader group of leaders in allied entities?

Government affairs work and advocacy are constants for most chambers, but how can you get beyond specific issues in order to nurture shared views of the future between public and private sectors, which can lead to aligned leadership down the road?



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Catalytic Leadership - questions

To acknowledge the inefficiency or ineffectiveness of our government systems, however, is not a matter of blame, shame or guilt. It's just...a thing.

We all know the clichéd acronyms that describe hindrances to community growth:

NIMBY (not in my backyard)

CAVE (citizens against virtually everything)

BANANA (build absolutely nothing anywhere near anything)

Now, we might need to add another to the list:

NIMTO (not in my term of office).

Limitations of
Government -
defined



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Can you count on an approved government grant or contract with the chamber to be paid in a timely manner?

Do you “take on” and “call out” those who govern poorly?

Do the “loud voices” in a government meeting halt meaningful reform or needed investment? (governance by the loud)

Is the passage of meaningful business legislation a rarity?

Are government rules contradictory for business?

Do you have “one issue” elected officials? Do they cripple you?

Limitations of Government - questions



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ACCE Horizon Initiative

Chambers: 2025

Q: SELECT the ACCE Horizon Initiative 2025 Influence that is
of MOST IMPORTANCE to your chamber:

Text: JEREMYARTHUR702 to 37607

Online: Pollev.com/jeremyarthur702





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Trends

Q: My chamber is IDENTIFYING TRENDS in our COMMUNITY.....

(Ex: Income & Revenue, Membership, Competition, Our Industry, etc.)

Text: JEREMYARTHUR702 to 37607

Online: Pollev.com/jeremyarthur702





Trends

*Income and Revenue

*Membership

*Competition

*Industry

*Economic development

*Education

*Workforce

*Talent development

*Policy

*Advocacy

*Diversity, Equity, & Inclusion

*Community Impact

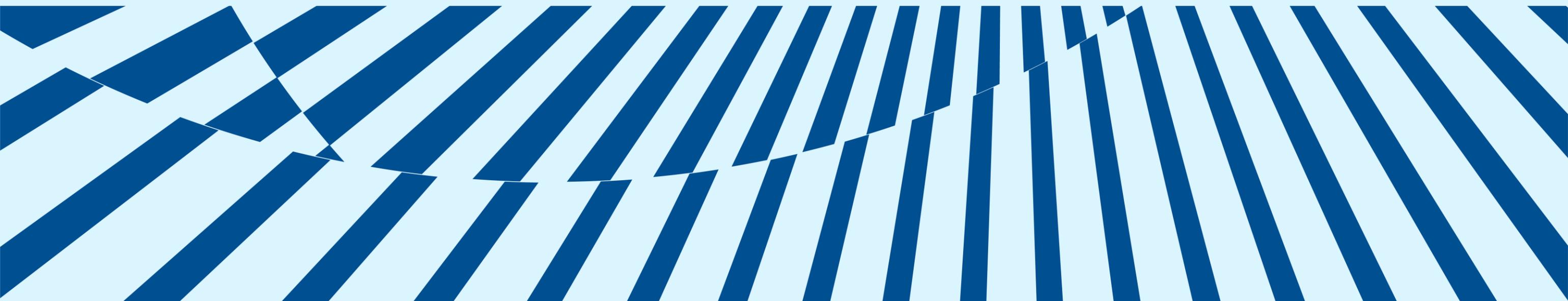
*Transactional vs.
Transformational

*Generation shifts/impacts

*Changing Business Models

*Mission & Purpose

*The list could go on and on....



Are your income/revenue streams changing?

The last year...

The last 5 years...

Has there been a shift?

If so, will that shift continue?

If not, is your current stream sustainable?

How diverse are your income/revenue streams?

New member dues, renewal %, event driven, fundraisers/capital campaigns, special programs, “must-haves,” etc.

Do you have a “Plan B?” A “backup” plan?

Will your income/revenue streams sustain your current program of work? Your strategic plan?

Are you “breaking even” or “barely getting by?”

Are you “losing money” or “going broke?”

Are you “making money” with a vision?

Are you “making money” without a vision?



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Income & Revenue

Will your income/revenue streams sustain your current program of work? Your strategic plan?

Are they “diversified?”

Are they “sustainable?”

Are they “long-term viable?”

What are your “go to” funding plans for the future?

Are you “adapting?”

If so, how quickly? What determines your speed?

If not, should you be?

Have you honestly asked the question?

Income & Revenue



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Do you have “value?”

Can you *sell* it?

Do members *buy* it?

Do you *believe* it? Your board? Your community?

Are you *capitalizing* on your value?

Do you have an *exclusive* product?

Do you offer your members dues “options?”

Employee #

Investment

Levels

Tiers

A la carte

One size fits all

Other?

Membership



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Do you offer your members a “level of involvement” choice?

“All” In package

Social perks

Training opportunities

Civic duty (leave me alone)

Event participation

New members...

How do you get them?

Has your method changed?

What works?

What no longer works?

Are you thinking “outside the box?”

Membership



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Questions....

Who is our competition?

Why are they in the game?

Are they doing *it* better?

Are they doing *something* we're not?

Are we driving folks to the competition? /
Giving a reason to leave us?

Competition



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Do you see local trends impacting you?

Do you feel global trends impacting you?

Is it a mix?

Is one dominant?

Is neither a factor?

Are you seeing a push toward:

Regionalism

Consolidation

Scarcity of funds

Continued issues of transparency

Board apathy, irrelevance

Ways to communicate

Leadership

Committees and programs

“Chamber” Industry



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The Chamber is a business.

Are we losing the battle of relevancy?

Are we letting others define us?

Have we sacrificed “quality for quantity?”

Have we given into the naysayers?

Are we issue and fact based? Opinions only?

Are we “scared” of politics?

What do you currently..... See? Hear? Think?

What do you no longer..... See? Hear? Think?

What do you need to..... See? Hear? Think?



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“Chamber” Industry

Talent is the new inventory driving economic development and investment decisions.

Talent pipeline

- *Connect youth and adults to work-based learning
- *Summits and events
- *Post secondary education opportunities

Childcare issues as a driver....

- *database, survey of working parents, overcome barriers to childcare access, what is the cost of childcare for the average home, help breakdown barriers to childcare

Are you helping your talent pool?



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Economic &
Community
Development

Education

Workforce

Talent Development

Are we...

- * Convening?
- * Facilitating?
- * Leading?
- * Building Partnerships?
- * Fostering collaboration?
- * Gathering stakeholders?
- * Creating change?
- * Affecting real change?
- * In-touch?
- * Doing our research?

Policy & Advocacy



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Leadership (is there a commitment?)

Events – talking about inclusive growth
inequities in the business environment

Virtual townhalls – real conversations

Challenges

Working to affect real change

Equality of opportunity – open and safe is only a
start – open for all is imperative

Diversity, Equity, &
Inclusion



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DEI Statements

- *included with Value Statements
- *separate Listings
- *are they being practiced (or just envisioned)

Employees in the workplace /

Assisting our Employers with DEI

Purchasing power of minority groups

- *highlighting, showcasing, spotlighting, etc.

Policies and programs to improve DEI efforts

- *internal
- *external

Diversity, Equity, &
Inclusion



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Are you solving most pertinent community challenges?

Are you shaping the future of your community?

People want to feel a part of something bigger than themselves!

It's not my work, it's my passion!

Look at things that are not aligned to our mission!

Are we beholden to irrelevant “strings” that detract from our mission?

The need for us to adapt is urgent!



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Community Impact

Transactional vs.
Transformational

Who will engage? How will they engage?

What is the “new” projected civic engagement?

- *Especially post-pandemic

Focus on ways to work with generations to make them feel comfortable!

- *Millennial-phobia

- *ways to engage from “Traditionals” to “Generation Alpha/Glass”

Network(ing) is NOT an Event!

- * future generations want to be involved, but may not want to join

- *want to take on issues/be engaged, not necessarily show up an event

Motivations for engagement can be very different!

It is not enough to treat a member as a member as a member as a member!

- *Each member is unique!



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Generation Shifts

Are you chasing the mission or the money?

Your chamber is a business!

Problem solving is now key!

- *This creates a strong value proposition!

- *Easy to show return on investment (ROI)!

Monetize your activities and expertise!

Things we discussed earlier:

- *diversified revenue streams, membership, less networking, etc.

Changing Business Models



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Mission based funding

Utilizing a “Foundation”: (501c3)

Funding

*sponsorships, government grants, events,
individual giving, corporate grants, etc.

Initiatives

*education, DEI, community development,
education, entrepreneurship, leadership,
workforce development, career
readiness, financial literacy programs, etc.

Changing Business Models



Mission is CRITICAL! (more than just a statement)

*must be clear, impactful, and community focused

Your mission is the PASSION that drives your work and your community IMPACT....your HIGHER PURPOSE.

ALL of your work must be driven to accomplish goals tied to your mission.

We have to “Just Say No” sometimes so we can be more effective at the important things!

Mission & Purpose



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Staying Ahead of the Curve

Q: My chamber is AHEAD OF THE CURVE...

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Online: [PollEv.com/jeremyarthur702](https://pollev.com/jeremyarthur702)



Shifts: Staying Ahead of the Curve

How do you identify trends?

Where have we been?

How did we get here?

Where are we going?

Are we there yet?

Says who.....

You cannot depend on your past accomplishments to move you into the future!

The same programs of yesterday will not lead you to be the chamber of the future!



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Are You A Trailblazer?

Has large risks AND large rewards...
Can be scaled for your chamber...but:

Think BIG!
Think OUTSIDE THE BOX!
Think toward the FUTURE!
Think of the NEED!
Think of the MISSION & PURPOSE!



Are You A Trailblazer?

2021 ACCE Chamber of the Year Winners:

Wooster Area Chamber of Commerce

- *Alignment of strategic plan
- *Chamber Hero Program
- *DISC Personality System (due to new staff)
- *Commitment to DEI (through Board leadership)
- *WoosterFest & Wayne Co. Home and Garden Show (monetize)
- *Membership Tracking Classifications (touch points)
- *Wooster is Hiring program
- *DORA: Designated Outdoor Refreshment Area (lmtd capacity during covid)



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Are You A Trailblazer?

2021 ACCE Chamber of the Year Winners:

The Chamber of Commerce of West Alabama

- *Next Level Initiative (identify challenges of workforce)
- *Small Business Relief Fund (\$1 mil of public funds during covid)
- *Conversion to cloud-based system (productivity and efficiency)
- *Diversity matrix (board nominations)
- *4th Quarter Drive (capital campaign)
- *Chamber Perks (affinity program)
- *Adopt-A-School Program (supporting public education)
- *Meeting demographic needs: Non-Profit Council, Veteran's Affairs Council, Women's Leadership Alliance, Diverse Business Council, Young Tuscaloosa
- *Worlds of Work (WOW) (career pathways for students)



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Are You A Trailblazer?

2021 ACCE Chamber of the Year Winners:

OneSpartanburg, Inc.

- *Bring Back the Burg (business recovery task force – covid)
- *Focus on: Talent, Economy, Place, Image (vision plan)
- *Merger: Spartanburg Area Chamber of Commerce, Spartanburg Economic Futures Group, Spartanburg CVB
- *DEI Plan (91 recommendations)
- *One Spartanburg Vision Plan (\$4.5 mil committed)
- *Needs identification/survey (employers)
- *Open for Business Guidebook/Commitment to Combating Covid
- *Small Business Recovery Fund
- *Capital Penny Sales Tax (indicator of retail sales)



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Are You A Trailblazer?

2021 ACCE Chamber of the Year Winners: Indy Chamber

- *Strategic Plan Initiatives – unite the Indy Region; grow and inclusive economy, tell the Indy Region story
- *Rapid Response Hub (one-stop resource for biz questions)
- *DEI focus: Business Ownership Initiative, Central Indiana Women’s Business Center, Hispanic Business Council
- *Project Amplify (lifestyle blog)
- *Accelerate Indy (economic development vision)
- *Business Equity for Indy (addressing systemic racism)



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Your Turn...

Time for you to share....

- *what's working for you?
- *what isn't/hasn't worked for you?
- *what do you want to try?
- *what's holding you back?
- *what do you need help achieving/overcoming obstacles?



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