

Political Astuteness: Bridging the Gap Between Politics and Professionalism

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Objectives

- Describe gap between political acceptability and administrative sustainability
- Discuss politics as choices among conflicting values
- Compare political and administrative values and perspectives
- Identify translating and aligning roles for chief administrative officers and upper level staff (electeds value added)

Values

- **RESPONSIVENESS =**
 - Representation/Participation +
 - Efficiency/Professionalism +
 - Social Equity +
 - Individual Rights

Characteristics of Politics and Administration

Political acceptability \longleftrightarrow Administrative sustainability

Characteristics	Politics		Administration
Activity	Game/allocation of values		Problem Solving
Players	Representatives		Experts
Conversation	"What do you hear?" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Passion ■ Dreams ■ Stories 	CAO and Senior Staff in the GAP \longleftrightarrow Electeds?	"What do you know?" <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ■ Data ■ Plans ■ Reports
Pieces	Intangible: Interests and symbols		Tangible: Information; money, people, equipment
Currency	Power (stories)		Knowledge (deeds)
Dynamics	Conflict, compromise, change		Predictability, cooperation, continuity

Facilitating Roles

- Translate the logic of politics and administration
- Bridge the gap between what is politically acceptable and administratively sustainable
- Align
 - Staff priorities with governing body goals
 - Governing body and staff expectations

Summary

- Bridging the gap is essential
- Good politics is about values not right answers—stories matter (convey values)
- Do not ignore any value over time
- Democratic process is “messy”
- Politics/administration=ways of thinking
- Role of translator/bridge builder is critical
- Aligning governing body/staff expectations is crucial
- Difference between “representative” and “trustee”