

## The City Attorney / CEO Relationship

1. Brief overview of the CLE (Kurt)
2. Self-introductions
  - a. Bill
  - b. Kurt
3. General Topic Areas (Bill/Kurt)
  - a. Importance of the City Attorney / CEO relationship
    - i. Key advisor
    - ii. Important part of the senior leadership team
  - b. The City is the client
    - i. Need for clarity early in the relationship
    - ii. Potential source of misunderstanding / frustration
  - c. Do not engage in politics
    - i. Provide objective advice
    - ii. Be candid and forthright
      1. Importance of “truth tellers”
    - iii. Input re: management and public policy issues is welcome
  - d. Providing advice that is understandable to a non-attorney
  - e. Importance of being succinct
    - i. Verbal
    - ii. Written (email / memoranda / formal opinions)
  - f. Importance of timely responses
    - i. Establish and honor due dates
  - g. It’s okay to say “I don’t know, but I will find out”
    - i. Don’t “wing it”
  - h. Be mindful that the CEO is dealing with a wide range of complex issues—your issue is not always at the top of the list
  - i. Be mindful of the CEO’s time constraints
  - j. Keep the CEO well informed—avoid surprises whenever possible
  - k. Do not take offense when the CEO asks critical questions—that is part of the CEO’s role
  - l. It’s okay to say “no,” but look for alternatives when possible
  - m. Help the CEO weigh risks
  - n. The City Attorney should be viewed as helpful and approachable
  - o. Schedule time for open-ended discussions (e.g., monthly 1:1 meetings)
  - p. Importance of early involvement with new polices, programs, and projects
4. Concluding thoughts / advice