



The Absolutes

1. Learn the Values, Vision and Mission. It is our *True North* and every employee should know and understand these.



2. It's the Partnership...it is **never** CAPNA.
3. Our brand is important. Use it. Protect it.
4. We are one company, many programs.
5. The natural tendency of the CAA model is for us to drift apart and work in silos. Help us stay glued together.
6. Every employee works for the Company, not a program.
7. Use our letterhead.
8. Tahoma 12 is the preferred font.
9. If you are using Powerpoint, use our default template.
10. The Leadership Model is a Servant Leader as found in The Leadership Challenge and Leading at a Higher Level.
11. Model the Way; Inspire a Shared Vision; Challenge the Process; Enable Others; Encourage the Heart – these are the five practices of exemplary leaders.
12. We never lead through fear and intimidation.
13. Leaders are always on stage.
14. YWTAYTT, BYWTLTYTT. (Your walk talks and your talk talks, but your walk talks louder than your talk talks.) Action speak louder than words.
15. People are fragile...handle them carefully.
16. Media interviews, press releases and other official public comments should come from or be approved by the CEO.

17. The way we communicate and what we communicate says a great deal about us as a company. We need to think through the consequences of our decisions and be prepared for many different reactions.
18. I expect information to flow across and down into every level of the Company.
19. In times of change it is important to communicate as much as possible. If we don't, staff and the public will fill in the blanks.
20. We are a large company in number of employees and geographic size. That can be good, but it takes hard work to keep us close together. Big is not automatically better.
21. Not everyone will enjoy our success. Be prepared to be criticized even when you do your best work. 'The Road Not Taken' is not the easy path.
22. I do not expect blind loyalty to our agency, but I do expect loyalty. We are in this together.
23. Dealing with the issues of limited income families and children can be difficult and requires sensitivity, compassion and care.
24. All employees have access to me...you should encourage organizational structure but at the end of the day, if an employee wants to contact me, they should be unhindered.
25. The HR Policy Manual is for every employee to be familiar with and understand. It is not a set of rules but it is a set of guidelines that help us all understand boundaries. Understand and execute it fairly.
26. The Financial Procedures Manual of the company is a great reference guide in all financial matters. Just remember one thing-we are stewards of taxpayer funds and we must be above reproach in the way we handle money.
27. In many ways, you are my agent and as such represent me.
28. Relationships and partnerships are keys to our success. Nurture and manage them well.
29. There is never a reason to not do what is right.
30. Listen and Learn from your peers.
31. We all learn by Example, Education and Experience. Don't stop learning and growing.
32. Become a Subject Matter Expert in your role.
33. Be a yardstick for quality and excellence.
34. Program standards as published by the funders and monitors should be our minimum standards. Learn them and follow them but don't allow yourself to think this is excellence. Achieve above the Minimum.
35. Don't forsake face-to-face communication. Don't let your use of digital technology tempt you to go where you shouldn't or use technology unwisely.

Company computers and phones are not yours...they are property of the Company.

36. It's okay to fail, but get up and move on. Learn from it.
37. If you mess up, fess up and let's deal with it.
38. Training and transfer should most always precede termination.
39. Hiring and firing must have my final approval.
40. Don't wait for funders and monitors to tell us how to do our job.
41. Be better than the funders require.
42. Under promise and over deliver.
43. Cultivate humility. It will keep you and the Partnership from being arrogant.
44. Feedback is helpful. Being critical and unfair of your co-workers is not.
45. When you travel on behalf of the company remember who you represent.
46. Employees who are willing to grow and work outside of their comfort zone help us all.
47. Let's work to make less of an impact on the environment.
48. Wear your name badge and be prepared to deliver the 'parking lot speech' when someone asks you about Community Action and our work.
49. Someone and some agency like ours needs to lead. Unless there is a reason not to, I expect that to be us.
50. Don't forget, it is not about you.

Our Vision

As a comprehensive business to be a premiere and preferred service partner creating a better community.

Our Mission

The Community Action Partnership of North Alabama, a results-driven, non-profit business is committed to reducing or eliminating the causes and consequences of poverty for families and communities.

Our Corporate Values

Financial Excellence
Exceptional Customer Service
Accountability
Compassion

Our People's Values

Innovative
Leaders of Change
Effective Communicators
Engaged in the Community

The Partnership - Parking Lot Speech - 2016

The Community Action Partnership of North Alabama (we call it the Partnership) is committed to reducing or eliminating the causes and consequences of poverty. As a comprehensive community action agency, our staff produces results through multiple programs that address the needs of families across north Alabama. We measure our results by understanding how we change communities and impact the lives of children, families and vulnerable seniors. Our Vision is to be a premiere and preferred service partner creating a better community.

I understand and agree to these Absolutes.

Name

Date

Things I wish I had or knew when I became a new ED at a CAA

1. Clear, recently reviewed By Laws that define Board membership, purpose, mission etc.
2. Who plans board meetings? Who communicates with the Board? Who records the minutes? How are open slots on the board filled? Do you have member positions open? How long?
3. Do you have financial expertise and early education professionals on the board?
4. Who is legal counsel to the Board? They cannot BE a Board Member.
5. Clear and up to date financial statements of all programs.
6. Clear, updated financial policies, and updated human resource policies.
7. A clean audit or a plan to correct any deficiencies of a recent audit. Who is the auditor and has this process been bid out recently.
8. Board meetings that are led by the Board Chair.
9. Minutes from at least the last years' worth of board meetings. Maybe more.
10. Clear updated job description for the Director and performance feedback at least annually.
11. Board Member job description and/or a Board Governance guide that provides the members limits and responsibilities.
12. Board member listing that is in balance with the By Laws and in compliance with CSBG (tri-partite board).
13. Board meetings that are open to anyone who chooses to attend.
14. The Board's understanding of the Executive Director's role and what the ED does with their time and travel.
15. Few if any credit cards and monthly reconciliation of that bill by someone not involved with the user of the card. Review agency Credit Card purchases.
16. Purchase order process.
17. Time keeping process.
18. Interview and hiring processes.
19. Remote office policies and practices.
20. Clear agency vision and mission statement
21. Up to date community assessment and the process that was used to gather this information.
22. Salary guidelines and compensation strategy.
23. Clear branding and signage that represents the parent company.
24. Examples of correspondence that went out from the agency.
25. Regular communications to all staff from ED.
26. Up to date organizational chart.
27. Job descriptions on key jobs. Really all jobs.
28. Brief resume on each lead team member.
29. Clarity about any pending judgements, suits or outstanding risk issues affecting the agency.
30. Customer survey feedback.

31. Review what is on your website and what social media is being used to communicate about the company.
32. Listen to staff about performance and removing barriers that could assist them in achieving their goals.
33. Current partnership and funding/grant agreements (CSBG, LIHEAP, Weatherization, Head Start etc.)
34. Status of accomplishing CSBG Organization Standards.
35. Who is the ROMA trainer and what have they done?
36. Program monitoring reports and findings. How these were handled in response.
37. Information technology in use at the agency. IT strategies.
38. Telephony and telecommunications agreements.
39. Visit with staff. Visit community partners. Connect with all primary funders.
40. Is there a Leadership Team? Who is on it and how often do they meet?
41. Is there a grant writer? What has their performance been like?
42. What reports or other documents are overdue.
43. Performance review process and most recent reviews done on lead team.
44. Emergency preparedness and security.
45. Strategic Plan of the agency.
46. Funding partners.
47. Communication and Marketing plans and activities.
48. What is your brand and who is accountable for the brand?
49. What are the direct results achieved from CSBG?
50. Who are the local elected officials and how connected are you?