



Recommendations for the Performance Evaluation for the Jackson County Tourism Development Authority Executive Director

Following a review of several other destination marketing organizations' executive leadership evaluation processes and using our knowledge of DMOs across the region, our recommendation for the annual evaluation process for the Jackson County Tourism Development Authority (JCTDA) Executive Director is the following:

- I. Solicit feedback from the JCTDA board on the Executive Director's annual performance in six focus areas, on a scale of 1 to 5, using the following as a guide :

5 = *Superior* (Exceptional, exemplary performer, far above expectations)

4 = *Good* (Strong, highly motivated performer, consistently performs above requirements)

3 = *Normal* (Meets job requirements for position, does what he or she is supposed to do)

2 = *Poor* (Needs improvement or displays inconsistent performance)

1 = *Unsatisfactory* (Does not meet requirements, inadequate performer)

The six areas of performance to be evaluated are:

A. Initiative

The ability of the ED to recognize both opportunities and challenges and to demonstrate proactive leadership in addressing them is critical in a destination such as Jackson County, where other tourism stakeholders are often occupied with the many day-to-day details of running their own businesses and organizations. Many times, there literally will be no other person able to see what the ED can and should see given their experience, expertise, and "big picture" worldview of the tourism marketplace.

B. Industry Leadership and Engagement

In a county like Jackson—with its large, sprawling geography and very diverse portfolio of tourism assets—the ED is the glue that holds the visitor economy together. He or she must be able to rally disparate parts of that economy, keep stakeholder informed about the state of tourism in the county and beyond, and establish a vision and strategy for moving it forward. This includes regular and effective communication with the JCTDA board.

C. Community Leadership and Engagement

While tourism is a significant part of the economy in Jackson County, it's not the only component. The ED is the face of tourism in the county and must engage with a multitude of other community stakeholders, government officials, and elected leaders. It is inevitable that differing opinions about the direction of the visitor economy will come from within the county, some of which may even threaten its growth and viability. The ED must engage regularly with other influencers to help shape policies and opinions, and to address threats to the visitor economy when they occur.

D. Fiscal Management

Given the JCTDA's investment of occupancy tax dollars and the fiduciary duty that accompanies it, the practice of sound fiscal management is essential on the part of the ED. This includes managing and developing the annual budget and having a clear understanding of the policies that surround government revenue and expense accounts.

E. Destination Marketing and Management

The very core of the JCTDA's mission is destination marketing and management. The ED is ultimately the person responsible for managing the activities that fulfill that mission and for promoting Jackson County as a desirable, thriving destination. The role of destination marketing is relatively straightforward and is based upon the development and execution of an annual plan and leveraging other opportunities as they arise. The role of destination management, however, is considerably more complex and involves engagement with numerous stakeholders and leveraging resources to make the county a better place to live, work, and visit.

F. Achievement of Organizational Objectives

As an organization, the JCTDA should have a clear set of metrics by which its progress can be measured. This includes occupancy tax collections, the most straightforward of measures by which the performance of the organization, its board, and the ED can be assessed. This criteria is the most quantifiable of the evaluative measures available to the JCTDA board.

While the weighting of the evaluative criteria may vary for other DMOs, for the JCTDA it is recommended that the weighting of these criteria be equal to each other. In a destination like Jackson County, each of the criteria is equally important for driving the growth of the visitor economy, particularly given the lack of a single dominant organizational driver of tourism in the county (such as a large attraction or hotel) and that there are no other TDA staff besides the Executive Director.

Board members should be encouraged to provide detailed feedback whenever possible. However, some board members may not have either sufficient board tenure or regular engagement with the ED to provide adequate feedback, so their opinions should only be used to inform the formal evaluation delivered by board leadership to the ED.

- II. In advance of an in-person evaluation, ask the ED to provide his or her own thoughts on their performance during the last year, including accomplishments, areas for improvement, and goals for the coming year.
- III. After soliciting feedback from the rest of the board and the ED, the chair and vice-chair of the JCTDA (or the entire executive committee, if more appropriate) should complete the entire evaluation form and then conduct an in-person evaluation with the ED, reviewing the past year's performance and identifying opportunities for growth. A signed copy of the evaluation should be provided to the ED, and the evaluation should remain confidential and placed on file with Jackson County Government.

Jackson County Tourism Development Authority

Executive Director Performance Evaluation

Scale

5 = *Superior* (Exceptional, exemplary performer, far above expectations)

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Job Performance Areas

Score

1. **Initiative**

JCTDA Chair Comments:

2. **Industry Leadership and Engagement**

JCTDA Chair Comments:

3. **Community Leadership and Engagement**

JCTDA Chair Comments:

4. **Fiscal Management** _____

JCTDA Chair Comments:

5. **Destination Marketing and Management** _____

JCTDA Chair Comments:

6. **Achievement of Organizational Objectives** _____

JCTDA Chair Comments:

TOTAL _____

Additional JCTDA Chair Comments:

Chair, JCTDA

Date

Executive Director, JCTDA

Date