

# Discovering Your Political Capital

*Turning Chamber Members Into Policy Makers*

James McCoy

Vice President of Public Policy & Communications

ACCE Convention 2004

Orlando

August 13, 3004

 **winstonsalem**  
chamber of commerce



# Does Your Chamber Matter?

*Do not be loved. Be feared. Be respected.*

- What do elected officials think of your Chamber?
- Do your members believe you have political power and influence?
- What public policy have you changed or improved for your members?



# Earning Respect as a Grassroots/Grasstops Organization

- Which members give money?
  - Corporate PACs, Campaign Finance Reports, Political Mailing Lists and Fundraisers
- Which members are willing to make calls, write letters, and visit elected officials?
- What are your issues? Do they matter to your members and to your community?
  - Government Affairs Committee, Board of Directors, Executive Committee



# Who Has the Power?

- Staff alone are not powerful.
- Your members hold your political capital.  
**USE IT!**
  - Educate Members on Issues – **DO YOUR HOMEWORK**
  - Educate Elected Officials – **USE YOUR MEMBERS**
  - Use information to create a codependent relationship.



# Winston-Salem Transportation Workgroup

- Members: 5 Chamber Members, 5 Transportation Professionals, Mayor, City Manager, DOT Board Member, 2 Legislators
- Only Transportation Advocacy Group
- Codependent Relationship
- Accomplishments: Legislation Securing \$110 million in Highway Funding, Grant for \$4.6 million for rail station



# Train Your Members

Train Your Members To Be:

- Loud
- Tough
- Willing to Compromise
- Knowledgeable on Issues
- Polite
- Communicate with You
- Communicate with the Community



# Discovering Your Political Capital

*Making Your Chamber a Policy Maker*

ACCE Convention 2004

Orlando

August 13, 2004

 **winstonsalem**  
chamber of commerce