

Calgary Chamber

Director, Policy & Communications

Position Description
June 2019



THE ORGANIZATION

For more than 128 years, the Calgary Chamber has been the city's main connector of people, ideas and stories. They have facilitated meetings, debates and gatherings with some of the brightest minds in Calgary to solve business problems, and advance the needs of business in a way that makes our city a better place to be successful.

Throughout these efforts the Calgary Chamber has emerged as one of the most progressive and influential organizations in the country. And yet their goal has always remained the same - create connections that help solve business challenges and inspire business to do more here in Calgary.



THE ROLE

Director, Policy & Communications

The Director, Policy & Communications is essential for advancing and achieving the Calgary Chamber's goals in terms of inspiring members and businesses within our community. This role reports to the President and CEO and is an exciting opportunity for the right candidate to drive policy development and communications for the organization's future. Advocacy to all levels of government is an essential part of the Chamber's role and fulfils the strategy goal of being the 'podium of record' for the Calgary business community. In addition to developing policy and advocacy strategies and implementing strategic communication strategies across all platforms, this position will work alongside all departments consistently communicating the value and purpose of the Chamber internally and externally.

Responsibilities:

Policy and Government Relations

- Plan and implement a detailed process for the policy and advocacy work of the Chamber. With the goal of crafting policy positions/solutions that will enable Calgary, Alberta and Canada to be the most competitive jurisdiction for business.
- Oversee the Chamber's policy and advocacy strategies.
- Oversee the coordination and ensure successful operation of the Chamber's member engagement related to public policy development.
- Oversee and approve the final public policy reports, resolutions, briefings and/or presentations that need to be submitted to necessary parties including all three levels of government, Alberta and Canadian Chambers of Commerce, pre-budget submissions, task forces and others as needed.
- Oversee the Calgary Chamber government relations efforts.
- Conduct regular meetings with elected officials in all three levels of government, continually working to establish relationships with them to understand their priorities and to advance the policy positions of the Calgary Chamber.
- Regularly engage elected officials and senior bureaucrats on major positions of the Calgary Chamber.
- Oversee the Calgary Chamber election strategies and efforts for elections occurring at all three levels of government.
- Lead the Indigenous Opportunities Committee to ensure meaningful engagement with the Chamber efforts on Truth and Reconciliation.

Communication

- Collaborate with the Chamber team on the creation of a comprehensive internal and external communications plan that will enable the Chamber to maximize their impact through thought-leadership and key initiatives.
- Be a communications "visionary", consistently bringing an understanding of communications trends, best practices and technologies to bear on Chamber work and how these might be best utilized given our organizational goals and resources.
- An internal champion of the brand, consistently promoting messaging and ideas internally as well as externally.
- Communicate complex and powerful ideas to a diversity of audiences, engaging internal and external stakeholders in ways that foster a sense of community.
- Act as a strategic communications counsel, partnering the team to build internal and external content, such as fact sheets, position papers, marketing materials, press releases, and digital resources for dissemination across various Chamber communications platforms, with a keen eye for specific Chamber audiences.
- Oversee the development of consistent messaging across the organization to promote the Chamber mission, vision, and values.
- Enhance communications standards and systems including branding and style guides, social media content policies, and inter-departmental workflows.
- Train cross-functional teams around communications best practices and systems.
- Be a capable and available spokesperson for the organization, to members and the media.

Strategic and Business Planning and Budgeting

- Participate in strategic planning, business planning and performance assessment activities of the Calgary Chamber.
- Develop, recommend, and manage the department's annual budget, ensuring results, accountability and value for dollars spent.
- Complete annual departmental plan (aligned with the organizational business plan and departmental strategies) that outline department objectives, activities and measurable outcomes.
- Identify, evaluate, recommend and execute alternatives to fund the Chamber's policy and research initiatives including preparation for grant and funding proposals and other approaches to raising revenue for public policy and research.
- Identify, evaluate, recommend and execute alternatives to fund the Chamber's communication program.

Leadership Team Involvement

- Build and maintain strong relationships with all members of the Calgary Chamber team.
- Work collaboratively as a member of the organization and act as a mentor and role model for all members of the organization.
- Participate in activities associated with the Board of Directors including preparation for board reports, and communications to support their oversight of the organization
- Ensure that the policy and research work of the Calgary Chamber achieves results and metrics associated with this aspect of the value proposition.

THE CANDIDATE

Core Competencies

The following experience and skills are desired for the role:

- A minimum of ten years' experience in government affairs, policy development, external affairs, public relations, and/or communications with progressive leadership responsibility and a track record of creating innovative communications plans and strategies that employ measurable tools and tactics.
- Bachelor's degree required; Master's degree, or similar advanced degree preferred.
- A background in policy development and government relations is required.
- An innate ability to translate key messages to varying audiences.
- A passion for government with a non-partisan government lens.
- Demonstrated Organizational Change Management experience and proven ability to develop, lead, challenge and motivate a best in class team of talent.
- Excellent project and team management skills.
- Excellent analytical, written, and verbal communication and presentation skills, with proven success tailoring messages to a variety of audiences, particularly in translating complex policy and advocacy work to a diverse range of stakeholders.
- Ability to develop and enhance strong communications standards, workflows, and branding guidelines while disseminating content across multiple mediums, including social media, newsletters, and more.
- An innovative and opportunistic approach to identifying new opportunities to advance the mission of an organization through strategies that position it to be a thought leader, develop new partnerships, and elevate organizational visibility.

Personal Characteristics

The ideal candidate will demonstrate the following personal characteristics:

- An entrepreneurial spirit that thrives in a changing, fast-paced, high-performing world-class organization.
- Bold and visionary; a self starter who is persuasive, intuitive, and exercises professional judgment, maturity, integrity and diplomacy.
- Strong interpersonal skills and ability to build organizational support for strategic initiatives.
- An open and candid communicator with exceptional verbal and written skills.
- Strong leadership skills and management presence with an ability to interface across all functional areas of the organization and with all external stakeholders to achieve organizational objectives.
- A positive attitude and the ability to work both independently and as part of a team.
- Unquestioned integrity whose personal conduct both on and off the job reflects favorably upon themselves and the organization.
- Willingness for some national travel in support of advocacy efforts.

CONTACT US

Adam Pekarsky - Founding Partner

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Adam is the Founding Partner of Pekarsky & Co. and has been recruiting executives in Western Canada for over 18 years. Prior to founding Pekarsky & Co. in 2009, Adam was a Client Partner in the Calgary office of Korn/Ferry International. In 2015 Adam was honoured with a *Business in Calgary* Leaders' Award and in 2016 he proudly accepted on behalf of his firm the Alberta Venture Fast 50 award.

Adam holds an LL.B. from the University of Alberta and a bachelor's degree in political science from Tufts University in Boston where he attained *summa cum laude* distinction for his undergraduate thesis.

Susie Besler - Principal

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Susie joined Pekarsky & Co. as a Principal in April, 2016. She brings with her a diverse background in the executive recruitment, healthcare and professional services industries. Prior to joining Pekarsky & Co., Susie worked as a Search Manager with Conroy Ross Partners, since acquired by Optimum Talent, where she specialized in the recruitment of finance and accounting leaders for organizations in Calgary.

Susie draws from her experiences as an entrepreneur, Chartered Accountant and Registered Nurse to bring both technical and business understanding to each client engagement. As a CA herself, Susie naturally leads the majority of Pekarsky & Co.'s senior finance and accounting searches though she has enjoyed the opportunity to branch into executive and operational C-Suite recruitment as well. She is known to her clients and candidates for her dedicated professionalism, business acumen and expertise in matching talent to client needs.

Susie holds a Bachelor of Commerce degree from the University of Calgary and a Nursing Diploma from the University of Alberta Hospital School of Nursing. Upon obtaining her business degree, Susie articulated with KPMG in Calgary where she served clients in the oil and gas, agriculture and manufacturing industries for four years before earning her Chartered Accountant designation.