

Advocacy: Building Relationships for Successful Outcomes

Advocacy

- * **The act or process of advocating or supporting a cause or proposal**
- * **Making a complex issue simple to understand and digest**
- * **Success is dependent on your message and your relationships with your legislators**

Advocacy Continued

- * **Legislators have hundreds of groups asking for something**
- * **Consistency will prevail**
- * **Think outside the box**
- * **Let them know they can reach out to you**

Building the Foundation

- * **It is important to build a solid foundation with your elected officials**
- * **No relationships are built overnight**
- * **Do not get discouraged**
- * **Is there a quicker way to build these relationships?**

Relationships 101

- * **Legislative relationships are a two-way street**
- * **Think of this as building a friendship**
- * **Key points**
 - * **Always be friendly**
 - * **Always be courteous**
 - * **Always be understanding**

Relationships 101 Continued

- * **Elements for success**
- * **Trustworthiness, make sure you provide information that is:**
 - * **Truthful**
 - * **Supported and easily checked**
 - * **Do your homework!**

Relationships 101 Continued

- * **Don't be afraid to write or call**
- * **Meet personally with staff as well as legislators**
- * **Staff set schedules, keep this in mind**
- * **Always make an appointment**
- * **Be as flexible as you can**

How to start/continue

- * **There are many ways to foster successful relationships**
- * **Public events**
 - * **Ground Breakings**
 - * **Social Functions**
 - * **Grand Openings, Dedications, Parades**

More...

- * **Photo opportunities**
- * **Send holiday greeting cards**
- * **Add them to your newsletter**
- * **Acknowledge awards and accomplishments**
- * **Send newspaper articles**

Successful Legislative Meetings

- * **Prepare in advance what you want to say**
- * **Know the material inside and out**
- * **DO NOT overwhelm them with your knowledge**
- * **You are there as an educator, they are your student**

Successful Legislative Meetings...

- * **Never argue, you might win the battle but loose the war**
- * **Be respectful of their position**
- * **If in disagreement, retreat and circle back**
- * **Always send thank you notes!!!!**

Successful Legislative Meetings...

- * Stay focused
- * Keep on track
- * Be cognizant of the time and their time
- * If time runs out, offer to circle back

How to Prepare

- * **Have an idea of what you would like to accomplish**
- * **Be realistic on your expectations**
- * **Research your points**
- * **Use current, easy to understand talking points**

How to Prepare

- * **Always have something to hand-out**
- * **Your handouts should use bullet-points when appropriate**
- * **Avoid graphs and charts on your one-pager**
- * **Prepare an “elevator” pitch**

How to Prepare

- * **Role play, role play, role play!**
- * **Practice meetings with friends and family**
- * **Have materials prepared well in advance**
- * **Make them easy to understand**
- * **Have contact information in more than one spot**

Let's Have a Meeting

- * **Be prepared for:**
 - * **Being impatient**
 - * **Shifting the conversation**
 - * **Challenges**
 - * **Opposition**
 - * **Agreements**

Role Play, Lets go!

- * **Refresher:**
 - * **Introduce yourself, organization**
 - * **Keep on track**
 - * **Be courteous**
 - * **Know your material**
 - * **If you don't know, tell them so**
 - * **Thank them for their time and ask for a card for follow-up**