

Institute for Organization Management
C270: Effective Government Affairs Programs
Northeast | August 4, 2022

“Business must learn the lesson long ago learned by labor and other self-interest groups. This lesson is that political power is necessary; that such power must be assiduously cultivated and that, when necessary, it must be used aggressively and with determination — without the reluctance which has been so characteristic of American Business.

— *Justice Lewis F. Powell prior to his appointment to the U.S. Supreme Court*

Course Objectives

- Determining who should be Involved and Why
- Creating a policy agenda
- Running a grassroots network

WHY SHOULD YOU ENGAGE IN GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS AND WHO IS YOUR TEAM?

So why Engage in Government Affairs?

- Public policy matters to the success of your members
- As the voice of business, or the voice of your industry, elected leaders need to hear from YOU!
- Your members cannot accomplish alone what they can when they partner with a respected organization like yours
- If you don't, someone else will

Determining Who Should be a Part of Your Team

- Members
- Government Affairs Committee | Issue Specific Subcommittees
- Board of Directors
- Staff

BUILDING YOUR POLICY AGENDA

Creating a Policy Agenda

- Decide what issues really matter
- Choose your issues with care
- Partner with others who care about your issues
 - State chamber or associations
 - U.S. Chamber of Commerce

- Look for unexpected allies
- **The All-Purpose Agenda**
 - Broad-based policy statement that will allow for quick maneuverability
 - Develop priority talking points
 - Consider how your agenda will be interpreted at all levels of government

Identifying and Tracking Legislation

- Maximize FREE resources
 - Internet
 - State | City | County Websites
 - National Organizations
- Staff Legwork
 - Daily check-ins | Research
 - Communication to members
 - Grassroots development
 - Action Alerts

BUILDING YOUR GOVERNMENT AFFAIRS TEAM

Building and Managing Your Grassroots Network

- Start with your members
 - Who regularly attends your government affairs related events?
 - Who is the most outspoken at these events?
 - Who finds it hard to leave meetings because they're talking with speakers and other members about the subject matter?
 - Who on your Board takes the greatest interest in all things related to government affairs?

Tools for Building your Network

- Grassroots and Grasstops Database
- Segment your issue areas of interest
- Gather as much information on your members as you can
 - What district do they live in?
 - What district is their business in?
 - Do members have long-standing relationships with elected leaders
- Newsletters
- Are you blogging?
- Social Media
- Participation in Town Halls
- Member Site Tours with Elected Leaders

When do you Activate the Network?

- What's your biggest priority of the year?

- Bill or ordinances you were not expecting, but that pose a serious benefit or threat to your members
- When you think you're the underdog
- When it's time to celebrate !!

Communicating Your Agenda

- **Members**
 - Create a library of your policy positions
 - Newsletter and other e-mail communications
 - Ask for feedback
 - As the issue moves forward, update membership
- **Elected Leaders**
 - Written policy statements
 - Ask for commitments on where they stand on your issues
 - Public forums led by your government affairs committee
 - Relate all issues back to the health of your business community
 - Office Meetings
 - Securing an Appointment
 - Time Sensitivities
 - Fact Sheets
 - Personal Experiences and Stories
 - Group Size and Accommodations
 - Follow-up Strategies
 - Building Relationships with Staff
 - Committee Meetings
 - The importance of Staff Connections
 - Work Sessions vs. Public Hearings
 - Delivery of Public Testimony
 - Appropriate Use of Handouts
 - Effective Follow-up Strategies
 - Correspondence
 - Addressing Correspondence
 - Constructing an Effective Advocacy Letter
 - Who should receive your letter?
 - Telephone Calls
 - Know who you are calling
 - Be prepared
 - Be able to convey your message in a variety of ways
 - Ask for a commitment
- **Media Partners**
 - Print
 - Editorial Board Meetings
 - Opinion-Editorials (Op-Eds)

- Letters to the Editor (LTEs)
- Press Releases
- Get to Know “Beat” Reporters

- Electronic
 - Radio
 - Television
 - Use of Numbers
 - Keep Sentences Short
 - RELAX

- Digital Media
 - Website
 - Social Media Platforms
 - Be honest about who you are
 - Maintain a positive attitude focused on solutions

WANT TO CHAT?

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