



LNC Class 31 Government Session

Dos and Don'ts for Engaging with Elected Officials

BEFORE THE VISIT

Do your homework -

1. Connect with the office that oversees lobbying rules, processes and reporting in your job.
2. Be aware of recent news stories about the member, but don't assume you know their positions.
3. Learn the member's priorities, main policy concerns, and what they are trying to accomplish.
4. Align the ways you talk about your work with what they care about.
5. Write your talking points - stick to 3-5 key ideas and a couple of stories.
6. Prepare to share the advantages and disadvantages of what you are proposing, not one side.
7. Have a realistic understanding of the long timelines and processes of government.
8. Develop relationships long before you are going to ask for something.

DURING THE VISIT

Be pleasant and engaging -

1. Don't go in pointing fingers, making demands or accusations.
2. Share why their constituents may share your perspective.
3. It is good to have a few key metrics or data points, but don't overwhelm them.
4. Stories (true, brief, and with a take home message) can be memorable.
5. Connect with the staff - they are important in getting things done.

Get to the point -

1. Practice in advance.
2. Refer to your talking points (but don't read from them - just use them as a reference).
3. Use the sandwich - tell them what you are going to tell them, tell them, and then review key points.

Have an ask in mind -

1. What do you want them to do?
2. Explain how you or your organization could be helpful in accomplishing it.
3. Work on becoming a trusted source of information on that topic.

AFTER THE VISIT

1. Send a brief thank you with key take homes for you from the meeting.
2. Do anything you promised in a timely manner.

SOCIAL MEDIA

1. Be positive.
2. Ask if pictures are ok.
3. Share that you were there and possibly why, but not what the member said or did.
4. Tag the member's pages/profiles in your posts.
5. Use appropriate hashtags (#ncga, #ncpol, etc.).