Persistence Pays Off

ASCD’s Leadership Institute for Legislative Advocacy
January 23, 2012

Melissa Mellor, Public Policy Outreach Manager
Think of a good relationship that you have with someone.

Why is it good?
Advocacy = Relationship Building

5 Tips for Building a Relationship with Your Lawmaker

1. Express your gratitude and appreciation.
   - LILA thank you letter
   - Throughout the year

Source: www.resumeswan.com
5 Tips for Building a Relationship with Your Lawmaker

2. Listen.
   - What are their priorities?
   - What information are they seeking?
5 Tips for Building a Relationship with Your Lawmaker

2. Listen.

- Lawmakers’ communication channels:
  - Website
  - E-newsletters
  - Twitter
  - Facebook
Flickr Photo Gallery

Latest News | Facebook

Moran Statement on the 10th Anniversary of Guantanamo
Jan 11, 2012 | Press Release
Every day it remains open, Guantanamo is a black mark on the principle that America is a nation governed by the rule of law.

Moran Statement on Proposed Federal Employee Pay Increase
Jan 6, 2012 | Press Release
The Obama administration should at a minimum follow the standard formula for calculating pay raises, which the 0.5 percent increase proposal fails to do. Our nation is home to the best civil service in the world and they deserve compensation to match.

Moran Statement on Recess Appointments
Jan 5, 2012 | Press Release
The appointment of Richard Cordray as director of the Consumer Financial Protection Bureau, a full year and a half after President Obama established the office, is a long-delayed victory for the American people.

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Jim Moran
Jim_Moran

Jim_Moran I’ll be on @mnsbtv talking with @Jansingco at 10:20a.m. on Tune in! yesterday · reply · retweet · favorite

Jim_Moran House Republicans refused to let me speak on House floor today. GOP needs to return to work on #payrolltaxcut. Video: youtube.be/70AjkL9fQGA
2 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

Jim_Moran My interview today calling for payroll tax cut extension: bit.ly/2o7hQ
21 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

Jim_Moran On MSNBC with @BashirLive talking payroll tax cut
21 days ago · reply · retweet · favorite

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Take Our Online Poll

Veterans Input on New Mega-Clinic at Silver Cross
Please share with us your comments and suggestions for which health services should be provided at the new veterans outpatient mega-clinic scheduled to open in spring of 2013 at Silver Cross Hospital in Joliet.

*All fields marked with an * are required

First Name: *

Last Name: *
5 Tips for Building a Relationship with Your Lawmaker

3. Lend a helping hand.
   - Follow up on questions/requests for information.
   - Become a resource.
     ▪ Articles and research
     ▪ Reports, news, data from your school/district
     ▪ Local examples
3. Lend a helping hand.
   - 65% of staffers think online communications have reduced the quality of constituent messages.
   - “The ease with which constituents can communicate with their Member has diluted the quality of communications. We get way too many emails that forward the Congressman some email or YouTube link with ‘is this true’ as the only message.” ~House Legislative Director

Source: Congressional Management Foundation’s Communicating with Congress: Perceptions of Citizen Advocacy on Capitol Hill
5 Tips for Building a Relationship with Your Lawmaker

3. Lend a helping hand.
   Make your messages useful:
   - Discuss the impact of a policy on your state/district/school.
   - Provide reasons for your support or opposition.
   - Provide a relevant personal story.

Source: http://astoriedcareer.com
5 Tips for Building a Relationship with Your Lawmaker

4. Stay in touch.

What advocacy strategies/communication methods do you think have the most influence on members of Congress?
Advocacy Strategy Effectiveness

- Form Faxes: 0 (A Lot of Positive Influence), 30 (Some Influence)
- Comments on Social Media Sites: 1 (A Lot of Positive Influence), 41 (Some Influence)
- Form Email Messages: 1 (A Lot of Positive Influence), 50 (Some Influence)
- News Editorial Endorsement of an Issue: 10 (A Lot of Positive Influence), 65 (Some Influence)
- Visit from a Lobbyist: 8 (A Lot of Positive Influence), 74 (Some Influence)
- Comments During a Telephone Town Hall: 17 (A Lot of Positive Influence), 68 (Some Influence)
- Phone Calls: 14 (A Lot of Positive Influence), 72 (Some Influence)
- Individualized Email Messages: 19 (A Lot of Positive Influence), 69 (Some Influence)
- Contact from a Constituent Representing…: 36 (A Lot of Positive Influence), 60 (Some Influence)
- In-Person Issue Visits from Constituents: 46 (A Lot of Positive Influence), 51 (Some Influence)
5 Tips for Building a Relationship with Your Lawmaker

4. Stay in touch.
   - Send letters and emails.
   - 20% of congressional staffers say individualized emails and letters have a lot of influence on an undecided member; only 1% say identical form mail does.

Source: http://gyma.files.wordpress.com/2008/08/donkey-mailbox.jpg and pages.globetrotter.net/miche/liens/dolphin.html
5 Tips for Building a Relationship with Your Lawmaker

4. Stay in touch.

– Schedule a visit during a congressional break.
  - www.house.gov
  - www.senate.gov
– Attend town halls (virtual or in-person).
– Host a school visit.
School Visits

Congressman Frelinghuysen welcomes the opportunity to visit schools all across the 11th District! If you would like the Congressman to visit your school, please call his office at (973) 984-0711 to schedule a visit.

In the past two school years, Congressman Frelinghuysen visited the following schools:

- Black River Middle School
- Boonton High School
- Brooklawn Middle School
- Bridgewater-Raritan High School
- Burnet Hill Elementary School
- Byram Intermediate School
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
Thu, 01/05/2012 - 3:49pm

CONTACT: Megan Whittenmore  
(202) 225-7440

Congressman Cantor Visits Battlefield Park Elementary School

ramid of James Madison. The visit came after Holly Beazley, a student in Pam Franklin's fifth grade class, invited Congressman Cantor to the school.

At the end of the visit Congressman Cantor said, "Thank you Holly and all of your classmates for inviting me to visit your class today. The seat I serve in Congress today is the same one James Madison once held, so I'm honored I was here to share part of his story with you. James Madison was not only a Congressman, he also wrote our Constitution and set an example all of us in Virginia should be inspired to live up to. Thanks also to Principal Bradley, Ms. Franklin, and all of the teachers here at Battlefield Park who make sure each and every one of you has a great education and the opportunity to succeed."

Principal Judith Bradley added, "I think it was wonderful that Congressman Cantor took time out of his busy schedule to visit Battlefield Park. It sends a clear message to our students that their education is a community wide effort. Our students really enjoyed the reading about James Madison and the question and answer session that followed."

View photos of Congressman Cantor's visit HERE.
Social networking: growing use but one-way communications still dominates.
5 Tips for Building a Relationship with Your Lawmaker

5. Hold your lawmaker accountable.
   – Check voting records.
   – Follow up on their promises.
   – Politely express your disappointment.
Some Parting Thoughts

- Building relationships with your lawmakers means building relationships with their **staffers**.
- Know when to end a relationship but **don’t burn bridges**.
- **Respectful, clear, and ongoing communication** is key.
Your Advocacy New Year’s Resolution

What **one** action will you take to build your relationship with your lawmaker(s)?
Get Informed. Get Involved. Make a Difference

www.educatoradvocates.org
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