

“Integrating Advocacy into Your Organization”

A *Learn to Lobby* training of
Nexus Werx LLC

Presented by:

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WELCOME & INTRODUCTIONS “Elevator Speech”

- Name
- Organization
- What your biggest hurdle or fear is with advocacy?



#10YearsofStrongNonprofits
@learntolobby

ABOUT YOUR TEACHER

- 15 years of political experience
 - Aide to 2 State Representatives and a U.S. Congressman
 - Political campaign manager and consultant
- Ran a non-profit
- Chaired a Young Professionals’ Civic Engagement Committee



ABOUT NEXUS WERX LLC

- Founded Nexus Werx LLC and its *Learn to Lobby* programs to teach those who can’t afford a lobbyist how to successfully advocate
- Work one-on-one with non-profit ED’s, Development Directors, business owners, civic leaders
- Offer webinars and workshops on:
 - Lobbying 101
 - Effective Activism 101
 - Campaigning 101



LESSON 1:

What is Advocacy vs. Lobbying?

The information you are about to receive is educational only. Please consult an attorney for legal advice and an accountant for IRS compliance advice.



WHAT IS LOBBYING?

- Asking public decision-makers to support/oppose *specific* issues
- Asking members/clients to contact decision-makers on those issues
- Back-end work leading up to asking decision-makers

Specific Asks



WHAT IS NOT LOBBYING? (ADVOCACY)

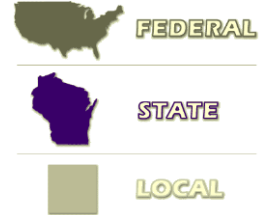
- Relationship-building with lawmakers
- Educating decision-makers and the public
- Researching issues and sharing results
- Taking public positions on issues/engage in public debate
- Working with other groups
- Voter Registration Drives

*General
Information
Sharing*



TYPES OF ISSUES

- Budgetary (Grants or Earmarks)
- Legislation
- Regulations
- Administration of Laws & Regs (Bureaucrats)



WHAT (GENERAL) ISSUES DOES MY ORGANIZATION FACE?

- Think “buckets” rather than House Bill 1234
- Think 2-3 years out



WHO WILL I NEED?

- Elected officials whose district is served by your organization
- Officials who are the decision-maker on issues impacting your organization



Advocacy Action Assignment

Identify 3-5 issue “buckets” for your organization.

Examples:

- State Education Policy
- Federal HHS Funding
- Local Public Health Policy



Identify: Which decision-makers will you need for your buckets?



Why are lobbyists able to get their requests to the “top of the pile”?



Key Point

"It's not what you know, it's who you know."



LESSON 2: Relationships



Key Point

You need relationships in order to be effective.



GOOD RELATIONSHIPS

- Two-way street
- Mutual respect
- Long-lasting



Key Tip

Try to build relationships *before* you need something.



RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING

- Go to events
- Introduce yourself.
Every. Single. Time.
(Sorry introverts!)



NETWORK AT EVENTS

- Official Office Functions
 - Town Hall Meetings
 - Coffee with the Congressman
 - Office Hours
- Large Community Events
 - Non-profit annual meetings/fundraisers
 - Ground-breaking ceremonies
 - Major community announcements
 - Anywhere a large number of voters will be present



EVENTS YOU CAN HOST

- Legislative “walk-thru” or Breakfast
 - Short (45 min), actually educational
 - Include or reference their constituents
 - Good food (skip the muffins)
- Host an “information session”
 - Either at the State House or in the District
 - On a specific topic
 - Do follow-up



RELATIONSHIP-BUILDING

- Just saying ‘hi’ when you don’t need anything
- Asking for advice
- Thanking or recognizing
- One-on-one meeting, not to lobby, but to educate on what your organization is doing/updates



Key Tip

If you’re meeting one-on-one with an elected official, assume you have a maximum of 10 minutes.



Example

Anti-addiction focused non-profit:

- Isn’t ready to expand services state-wide yet.
- When they do, they’ll need support.
- Held info-session on their work at the State House.
- Met with Administration officials.
- ED attended events for officials she’d need.



Advocacy Action Assignment

- Identify 2-3 relationship-building activities you will undertake in the next 3-6 months



POLITICAL CURRENCY

LESSON 3: Political Capital



Example



Key Point

Politicians are people, too.
and
Relationships with them are just like any other.



HOW DO I GET POLITICAL CAPITAL?

- Give them props
Thank you
call/letter/email/tweet
- Donate/Volunteer
on their campaign
- Be helpful



Key Point

The best way to get political capital is by being useful. The best way to **be useful** is to show their constituents that they're doing a good job.



BEING HELPFUL

- Speak up/Be the voice of reason
- Write Letters to the Editor and social media posts commending them

Key Tip

If you do something helpful, make sure their team knows.



Advocacy Action Assignment

Evaluate what you'll do to build political capital with the elected officials you need.

LESSON 4:

Easing Supporters into the Role of Advocates



DOUBLE-EDGED SWORD

Volunteers can increase your impact dramatically...

...if they're properly equipped.

Example

- A union asked elected official to be the lead sponsor on a budget amendment.
- Had their members call their Reps asking them to sign on...
- ...didn't tell constituents of the lead sponsor that he was already their champion.



INTEGRATE YOUR COMMUNICATIONS

- Start including updates on the Legislative/Regulatory/Budgetary issues your organization (or umbrella organization) is facing into your e-newsletter & social media
 - When applicable, mention what area elected officials are doing on the issue
 - Include a regular “who are my elected officials” link



INVITE THEM TO EVENTS

- Invite them to a Legislative Breakfast or walk-thru
 - Have them prepare a 30 second “elevator speech” (name, where in the district they are from, and how the organization has made a difference in their lives)
 - Have them follow-up with a phone call or email thanking their legislators for attending



INVITE THEM TO EVENTS

- Invite them to an issue forum
 - Have them write what town they are from on their nametag
 - Make sure they meet their elected official
 - Get them to take a picture and promote on social media (have an event hashtag and your handle readily available)



MAKE SURE THEY'RE REGISTERED TO VOTE

- Find a voter registration group to partner with like the National Voter Registration Day.
- Have forms and links available



ENGAGE IN ACTUAL ADVOCACY

*This crosses the line into actual lobbying. Be sure you're up to date on state/federal lobbying laws.



TRAIN THEM

- Hold an advocacy info session
 - Train them on advocacy 101 basics
 - Ask them to commit to one phone call/year



ADVOCACY REQUESTS

- Hold a “phone bank” party (with pizza)
- Make sure they’re speaking to *their* legislator
- Make it easy
 - Talking points
 - Contact info



Advocacy Action Assignment

Identify what steps you’ll take to ease your supporters into the role of advocacy over the next 12 months.



QUESTIONS & ANSWERS



WAYS YOU CAN STAY ENGAGED & LEARN MORE

- Post to social media your key takeaway from today’s workshop.
#10YearsofStrongNonprofits
@learntolobby
- Rate this workshop on Learn to Lobby 101 [Facebook Page](#) and share the page!
- If you have suggestions, please email them to me at feedback@learntolobby.com
- Sign-up to receive tips and articles on Lobbying & Advocacy

