

## TEN LOBBYING TIPS

- 1. Come Prepared**
  - Everyone should know what role (s)he is playing.
  - Bring a set of materials for the legislator.
  - Know how much time you have for the meeting
  - Know the issues
  - Know who are your allies and who are your opponents.
- 2. Identify everyone in the room.** It is important for the legislator to know you are a constituent, a contributor, or if you represent an organization.
- 3. Make it personal.** You shouldn't be debating the finer points of a bill. Your role is to make the bill come alive by explaining to the legislator what the bill would mean to ordinary people. Bring a client or tell clients' stories. This is the most important thing you bring to the meeting.
- 4. Say what you know.** It's o.k. to say to the legislator that you don't know the answer to a question. Acknowledge it and offer to get the facts and get back to them.
- 5. Be specific and direct about what you want.** Remind yourself what the purpose of the meeting is. Do you want the legislator to sponsor a bill? Vote a certain way? Speak to the leadership? Make sure you ask in a clear, direct manner but don't cross-examine them. Only one person should ask the "pindown" question.
- 6. Stay focused.** Legislators are good at pulling a "Seinfeld"—spending half an hour talking about nothing. Politely steer the conversation back to the issue you came to lobby on. Remember, it's your meeting so you should run it.
- 7. Don't argue.** No matter what, stay cool. You don't win any points for passion by arguing with a legislator.
- 8. Anticipate the arguments of your opponents.** It is better to address your opponent's arguments early in the dialogue. Do so directly and openly, without a hint of defensiveness.
- 9. Briefing materials should be brief.** Legislators and their staff glaze over thick packets of information. Legislators will read a one page fact sheet and probably nothing more than that.
- 10. Follow up.** Send a thank you to the legislator. The note should memorialize the commitments you extracted in the meeting. Then, follow-up to see if the legislator said what they said they would.