



Components of a Good Lobby Visit

Purpose

While it is obvious that the purpose of a lobby visit is to lobby on a particular issue or set of issues, we often forget some of the nuances. It is helpful to remember we also want:

1. To understand where the member stands on the issue(s).
2. To understand that member's interests.
3. To understand who has the power to change the problem.
4. To (hopefully) get a commitment of support for our issue.
5. To build relationships between our people and public officials and institutions influencing our community.
6. To train ourselves to "act" in public arenas. We can always get better at this, both as individuals and as a team.

Because the process of change takes time, lobby visits should be viewed as a part of a larger process. We need to gather information, build power, and continually get better at what we do and how we do it.

C o m p o n e n t s o f a g o o d v i s i t

Have a plan

Before you enter into a lobby visit *always* meet before hand and assign roles! Roles should include who will *credential* the group, who will take lead on each issue, who will make *the ask* and who will jump in if someone decides to lobby on an issue the group had not agreed to upfront.

The Credential

This is who you are and *who you represent!* You are more than 'a constituent'. You are a constituent who represents other constituents back home and you'll report back to them. Remember, politicians pay attention to numbers.

The Team Work

It is important to follow the plan you set during the pre-meeting. Of course you'll need to be flexible

The Ask

Why just tell them what you want – *Ask* if they'll support you! "Can we count on the Senator's support on this measure?" Listen carefully and ask for clarification if you get mush.

The Debrief

It's important to make sure we're on the same page leaving the meeting. As a group, review: What did we hear? Did we get what we wanted? What are the next steps? And it's important to help us get better to evaluate the group. How did we do? As a team? As individuals?