

TIPS TO MAKE YOUR MEETINGS GO SMOOTHLY & PRODUCE RESULTS

- ✓ **Make appointments with those you want to lobby and ask how much time is available so you can use it to your best advantage.**
 - Attempt to meet with any official who you believe may be interested in or connected to your issue.
 - Attempt to meet with officials who represent districts that are particularly affected by your issue.

- ✓ **Make sure you are well prepared for your meeting.**
 - Have two or three well-briefed speakers.
 - Prepare a brief written summary of your case, your organization's origin (if you have one), your credentials and your area of work; refer to it at the meeting and submit it to the official and others at the meeting.
 - Agree on the order of who will speak from your delegation and the issue each speaker from the group will address.
 - Assign someone to take notes.
 - Arrive five minutes early.

- ✓ **Consider these tips for presentation and discussion with the official.**
 - *Let them know who you are.*

Introduce everyone in your party and your organization: Explain why you wanted to meet and ask if you can begin by presenting your views and concerns and then get his or her reaction.
 - *Share facts and stories.*

When presenting your issue and views, it is important to have facts and statistics that show you have done some research. However, also find a few stories that illustrate your arguments. Stories personalize an issue and may resonate with a politician more than statistics.
 - *Stick to the basics.*

Try to keep your conversation focused on a few basic points. The more complicated and convoluted your message, the greater the chance the conversation will wander into uncharted territory. If the official you are lobbying changes the topic, gently return to your main point.
 - *Welcome questions.*

Ask if there are any questions and do your best to answer them. If you do not know an answer, say so and offer to try to find the answer and get back to them.
 - *Don't lose your temper.*

Don't get angry, sarcastic or discourteous. In rare cases, you may find an official is unresponsive or even openly hostile to your concerns. If that's the case, and you cannot find any common ground, you may wish to calmly reiterate your key points and end the meeting.

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- *Get a commitment.*

Ask your politician to do something concrete to show support for your issues. For instance, you may ask her/him to:

 - Make a statement to the plenary of a legislature;
 - Ask a question during the question period of a meeting;
 - Ask a relevant committee to look at the issue;
 - Raise your concerns within the party group, help you arrange a meeting with several other officials in their party or their party caucus chair;
 - Invite the officials to address your group or a local meeting that you are hosting; and
 - Talk to the press about the issue and share your points.
 - ✓ **After the meeting with the official, it is important to do some follow-up.**
 - Write a note of thanks for the time you were given to present your case and reiterate any agreed upon actions to prompt follow-up.
 - If there were requests for more information, ensure that they are followed up.
 - Keep the record of what was said at the meeting on file, especially if the official made any commitments to your group. Files of meetings can be useful for preparing for future meetings or presentations.
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