

# **Engaging Your Legislators**

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# LOBBYIST



**What my friends  
think I do.**



**What my parents  
think I do.**



**What the other side  
says I do.**



**What society thinks  
I do.**



**What I think I  
do.**

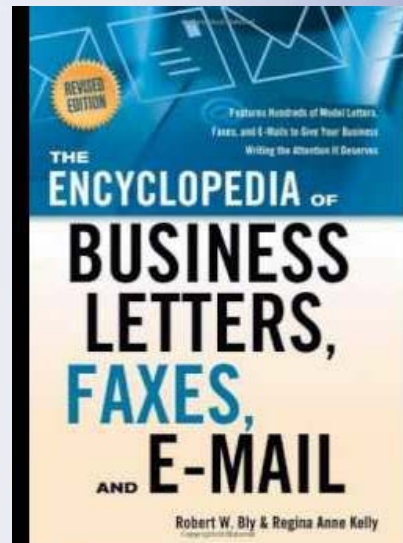


**What I actually do.**

# What is Lobbying?

- Lobbying: is the act of attempting to influence decisions made by officials in the government, most often legislators or members of regulatory agencies.

# Forms of Lobbying



# Reasons to Engage Your Legislators

- **A piece of legislation that has or has not be introduced**
  - House Bill 1
  - Senate Bill 1
- **An issue you, your business and/or your community is facing**
  - What's happening around you?
- **Because they represent you**
  - Whether or not you voted for them, they're your voice here in the Statehouse

# Arranging a Meeting

- **Call the Columbus office for all meetings**
  - Whether setting up a meeting here or in the district, go through the Columbus office.
  - Many Legislators hold office hours in the district at a coffee shop or a local office
    - **Staff Interaction**
      - If your legislator is unable to meet with you, meet with the staff, legislators lean on staff!
      - Be clear with your request, how many people will be attending the meeting, how long, etc.
      - Call and confirm the appointment a few days before the meeting

# PLAN AHEAD!

- Define your issue
  - Proponent/Opponent
  - Suggested Changes
- Gather your materials and have extra copies
- Be prepared to be flexible, and when possible, arrive early. The statehouse is constant motion.
- Establish your message
- If multiple people are attending, establish a spokesperson and roles for each attendee

# Individual Engagement

- Define which legislators you are attempting to influence
  - Your Legislator
  - Sponsor of the bill
  - Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Ranking Member of the committee
- Contact the succeeding Chamber
  - Your Legislator
  - Chairperson, Vice-Chairperson and Ranking Member of the committee
  - Who is “carrying” the bill?



# Community Engagement

- Define how and why you're reaching out to the community.
  - Define what are you asking of them
  - Provide options
- Local Government Officials
  - Ask them to contact Statehouse Officials
  - Pass a resolution
- Media
  - Social
  - News station
  - Newsletters

# Your Message

- Talking points, Statistics and Graphs
  - Keep them clear, concise, and above all, **accurate**
- Written VS. Verbal
  - Information provided in one medium should support the other
- Information Overload
  - Be very careful of this! You want your information to flow easy
  - Your legislator should be able to repeat the story to his/her counterparts

# Additional Tips

- Do NOT guess your answers! If you do not know the response to a question, say it. It's better to find the information and follow-up.
- Thank them for their time at the end of the meeting.
- Send a “Thank You” note or follow-up letter
  - Include any commitments made during the meeting
  - Include any additional information that was referenced during your meeting.
- Do everything you can to end on a positive note.