



WORKING WITH GOVERNMENT ... TO GET RESULTS

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DESTINATION INCLUSION: SACOSS Stronger Communities Conference 2008



TOP TEN TIPS

1. **Know your stuff**
2. **Know your target**
3. **Choose your messenger**
4. **Keep it short**
5. **Follow up**
6. **Build relationships**
7. **Never blind-side**
8. **Stay informed within**
9. **Be seen**
10. **You don't have to spend mega-bucks**



KNOW YOUR STUFF

- **Know your subject matter – you must prove it, not just assert it**
- **Be confident of your material**
- **Know what you want to achieve**
- **Let them know how important the issue is to you and how serious you are ... eg sustained campaign?**
- **Have a key message – maintain consistency throughout**
- **Stats / research/ evidence to support your case is critical**
- **Be prepared for unexpected questions**



KNOW YOUR TARGET

- **Know your audience/who you're meeting with – look to establish a 'connection'**
- **Know wiift, specific interests/passions, who they listen to**
- **Know their sensitivities – eg timing, social inclusion**
- **Be constructive, go with a solution ... and one that is publicly defensible – how does your program/initiative help them achieve an objective/resolve a problem (eg SASP targets)**
- **Consider 'mutual obligations'**
- **Don't assume they've been briefed – even Ministers**



CHOOSE YOUR MESSENGER

- **Rule of thumb: to get time with a Minister – particularly at Federal level – you need your Chair or CEO**
- **Tip 1 prevails – know your stuff**
- **All members of a representation need to be well briefed**
- **Be clear on who is going to cover what**
- **Know who is going to take the lead role in the meeting**
- **Train your leaders in lobby/interview techniques**



KEEP IT SHORT

- **Generally, 30 mins appointment scheduled**
- **In reality, this becomes 20 mins ... intros, next appt**
- **Comes back to knowing your stuff – practice beforehand, if necessary**
- **Use their language**
- **Leave material supporting your case – succinct**
- **Have copies for advisors, senior bureaucrats**
- **Be professional, say thanks**



FOLLOW UP

- **Follow up with letter/email of thanks to key advisers, senior departmental staff – reiterate key points**
- **Send additional copies of materials or extra relevant information – still succinct**
- **If appropriate, let them know how other meetings went and who else held similar views/positions**
- **Don't be a one-hit wonder**



BUILD RELATIONSHIPS

- **Media - key reporters, press gallery**
- **Ministers & Shadow Ministers, MLCs, Senators, backbenchers and Independents ... committees**
- **Don't overlook the up-and-comers – on both sides**
- **Key stakeholders**
- **Senior bureaucrats, advisers, staffers, PLOs & MLOs**
- **Your own customers/clients and the general public – for mobilisation of community attitude/opinion**



NEVER BLIND-SIDE

- **Use the media – but operate on a basis of ‘no surprises’**
- **Be very cautious how you use controversy**
- **If a public stoush is to be had, generally all other avenues have been exhausted**
- **Regardless, it’s advisable to give a heads-up to the principals that you have been meeting with/lobbying on your intended action(s)**
- **Pick your battles, never ‘go the man’ ... but have a thick skin because you may not be shown the same courtesy**
- **Be strategic, provide options**



STAY INFORMED WITHIN

- **Keep your own Board/Council/Executive informed – don't underestimate the circles they move within**
- **Keep all staff informed – particularly those dealing with your customers/clients/the general public**
- **Ensure your own team is always fully briefed on developments ... and ensure they're up to the task – creative, tenacious, strategic thinkers and good communicators with their own strong networks**



BE SEEN

- Spend time in Parliament House – be seen walking the corridors
- A lot of information can be gleaned from chance encounters
- It's important that other MPs see you visiting their Parliamentary colleagues
- Much greater level of co-operation now exists between States & Feds
- Invite to interesting opportunities/events



DO IT SMART

- **It doesn't have to cost mega-\$\$\$**
- **Campaign communication strategy – a must**
- **Your own staff have an important role to play**
- **Considered stakeholder alliances can be very powerful**
- **Utilise existing publications**
- **E-newsletters/e-updates – regular or campaign specific**
- **Online polls/surveys**
- **Petitions**
- **... if working Canberra, consider professional assistance**



TOP 10.

1. **Know your stuff**
2. **Know your target**
3. **Carefully choose your messenger**
4. **Keep it short**
5. **Follow up**
6. **Build relationships**
7. **Never blind-side**
8. **Keep your own Board / Council / Executive informed**
9. **Be seen lobbying/advocating**
10. **You don't have to spend mega-bucks**



Lastly, if you get what you want ... acknowledge it!

Thank you.