

Ten Golden Rules of Lobbying

1) Politics is consumer driven.

Help your legislator understand why your position is important to his/her constituents. Use grassroots organizing to engage the constituency in the lobbying effort.

2) Do Your Homework

Know your stuff. Understand your issue, the bill you support or oppose, and the legislative process before you approach your legislator. Know who the players are, who decides what, and which issues are receiving much attention.

3) Information is Power

Give your legislator information that s/he can use, including what you are hearing from other legislators and from the legislator's constituents.

4) A Little Professionalism Goes a Long Way

Be credible, honest, and trustworthy. Do not threaten, lie, or conceal facts. Stay calm – if you lose your cool, the case is lost.

5) Be Positive

Always make your case without being critical of others.

6) There Are NO Permanent Friends and NO Permanent Enemies

Do not take your traditional friends for granted. Never write off a legislator just because of party affiliation. Do not make enemies of legislators, you may need them in the future.

7) Build a Bond, Not a Gap

Research what you and the legislator may have in common then use these shared interests to create friendly, frequent conversation with legislators.

8) Be a Partner

Build coalitions and look for allies among other organizations. Be accessible to legislators. Become known as a reliable resource.

9) Rome was not built in a day

Be willing to settle for making progress toward your goal, getting the bill passed, and fine tuning it in future sessions.

10) Stay Committed

You are the expert! You have a compelling, energizing reason to keep fighting until you get what you and the profession need.

This information was adapted from Lobby Day Team Training developed by the New Jersey Retired Education Association.