

The Two-Minute Punch

Getting your advocacy
message across in two minutes
(or less!)



Purpose

- You can meet a policymaker anytime, anyplace.
- If you are unprepared for this unplanned meeting, you have lost an opportunity.
- Successful businessmen have an “elevator pitch” – successful advocates should have the same.



Keys to effective advocacy

- Know the persons who create/change policy.
- To understand a situation that requires your advocacy, you have to know at what level a solution needs to occur and who “controls” that level.
- The first time you meet someone is not the first time you ask for their assistance.
- Understand their political philosophy and use their language: “Family values” vs. “It takes a village.”



Advocates...

- Problem-solve

- Participate

- Educate

- Mobilize

- A strong 2-minute punch incorporates all these elements.



Step 1: Organize your thoughts

- What do you want the person to learn?
- What facts do you have to support your message?
- What action do you want the person to take?
- What is your credibility?
- How can acting on your issue be a “win” for the policymaker?



Step 2: Make the introduction

- Write an opening statement that includes who you are, where you live, and what personal and/or professional interests you have in the issue.
- If you speak on behalf of an organization or group, include that information; but only if authorized to do so by the group.



Step 3: “I want you to know...”

- Write a statement you can memorize that your audience will hear and remember.
- Keep it short – 20 words or less
- Jargon- and acronym-free
- Positive or negative: “There are not enough caregivers....” or “Providing seniors with this coverage saves....”



Step 4: Just the facts

- List statistics that prove your statement.
- Cite references.
- Use statistics that relate to the person with whom you are speaking – federal stats for federal policymakers, etc.
- Organize stats, putting the most important first.



Step 5: “I want you to...”

- Write a statement you can memorize that explains exactly what you hope the policymaker will do for you.
- Jargon- and acronym-free.
- 20 words or fewer.
- Make sure you’re “asking” at the right level.



Step 6: “And the winner is...”

- Briefly speak about the advantages of agreeing to take action on your request, such as:
 - * Public opinion or support?
 - * Cost savings?
 - * Voluntary compliance with existing statute or mandate?
- Always keep these positive – never threaten or hint at negative consequences



Step 7: Prepare a fact sheet

- Put together a fact sheet that is a single page that includes:
 - * your contact information
 - * three or fewer facts from your list
 - * the action you want the person to take.
- Make it stand out by using colored paper, colored ink or by adding a photo that illustrates the constituency involved.



Step 8: Put it all together!

■ I am....

■ I want you to know that....

■ I know this because....

■ I want you to....

■ I believe this will be to your advantage because....

■ I want to provide this information for you....



More tips on effective advocacy

- Vote – they have the voter list!
- Get to know them before making a request.
- Be grateful and acknowledge their good actions.
- Be respectful and kind to assistants.
- Personal contact is best, then phone calls. Email is getting better, but still not perfect.
- Use the local offices of Congressional delegation. They have local connections and can send it up higher if necessary.



As you advocate

- Please remember the Oklahoma Developmental Disabilities Council! We have lots of information and resources to assist you in our Justin A. McCurry Library and Resource Center! We're located in Shepherd Mall, suite 74.



Contact information

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