

Government Relations Today

Advocacy NOW: August Appointment Planning

You've made an appointment to meet with your representative—now what?

You'll need to prepare by setting goals, finding a measure of success, researching the prospect and developing a presentation.

Goal Setting: Before any other steps are taken, clear goals should be formulated. Goals for meeting with a public official could include:

1. Introduce my Member of Congress (MOC) to the promotional products industry
2. Voice concerns over a specific issue(s)
3. Invite my MOC to a corporate or charity event(s)
4. Solidify an existing relationship

You may need to review your regional association's legislative mission statement to determine what goals are appropriate.

Finding Success Measurements: In order to determine the successfulness of a meeting, you will need to develop measurable indicators for your goals. If one of your goals is to voice concerns over a specific issue, would success mean receiving acknowledgment from the MOC that she understands your position or receiving a promise of some action. If the latter, what action would you like the MOC to take?

Researching the Prospect: Any good sales professional knows that you can't enter into a meeting without knowing about the goals and interest of the prospect company; the same is true for a meeting with a public official.

Questions to answer about your MOC:

1. What are her policy goals or interests?
2. To what party does she belong? (Some of her policy-related responses may be dictated by a party's platform)
3. When is she up for re-election? (Note: all members of the House of Representatives are up for re-election this November)
4. Does she utilize promotional products in her campaigns?
5. Has she already taken a stance on an issue about which you are concerned by making a public statement or being a co-sponsor of the legislation?

You can translate all of this into a plan of action for your meeting.

Presentation Development: For your MOC, you will need to answer the Five W's.

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*Mark your Calendars
for PPAI's next
Product Safety Webinar:
CPSIA Flowchart Approach
August 5*

Presentation Development: For your MOC, you will need to answer the Five W's.



Is your elevator speech ready to bring you to the next level?

[Learn more about this personal and industry introduction.](#)

Who: As you know, people outside our industry often have a hard time understanding exactly what we do. What are promotional products? What is the industry about? By meeting with your MOC, you are beginning a new relationship and representing the industry. Let her know the value of promotional products and their use in the marketplace.

What: About what issue are you concerned? BE SPECIFIC – include bill numbers.

When: When is the event or when would you like some action taken?

Why: Why are you concerned about a particular issue? Why should your MOC care?

How: In what specific way would you like your MOC to respond to your request? Do you want her to attend your event or would it alright if a staff person came in her stead? Would you want her to vote against a particular piece of legislation?

If you need assistance with any of the steps outlined in this article (goal setting, determining success measurements, researching the prospect and developing your presentation), please don't hesitate to contact [Anne Lardner](#) or [Eme Alberico](#).

For more comprehensive guidance on congressional appointment planning including e-mail and letter samples, check out an upcoming issue of [Newslink](#) where PPAI will publish its How-To Guide.

Regional Advocacy Strategy

The following items were included as suggested advocacy items in the calendar passed out at RAC's LDW. You can review a copy of that calendar [here](#).

Recruit New Members/Update Advocate List: Consider this fall cleaning.

Mission Statement: Your legislative committee's mission statement may have been created using a generic format in order to start the committee. Review your legislative committee's mission statement and consider changes based on your committee's actual function within the association.

Member/Legislative Board List Review: Do you have all of your committee members' contact information? Is it current? Send out an e-mail requesting a review of current information.

Member challenge: Re-engage your members by challenging them to make a phone call to their MOC, to send a certain number of e-mails, or to volunteer to man a Government Relations booth at an association event.

Conduct activist training: Publicize and attend PPAI's webinar on "Legislative Advocacy—How To Make Your Voice Heard" to be held on September 22.

Encourage voter registration: Legislative committees can encourage the voter registration of their associations by creating their own campaign or by publicizing an existing one, like "[Rock the Vote](#)." To find out more about registering to vote in your state, visit the [U.S. Election Assistance Commission's website](#). If you plan on starting your own "Get Out the Vote" campaign, review [PPAI's guide](#).

LDW Legislative Roundtable: Your Suggestions

When asked to provide your thoughts on PPAI's advocacy program and what more it could do for you and your associations, you delivered!

Here are some of the requests regional association leaders voiced during LDW's Legislative Roundtable.

- More *Education* regarding how to sell promotional products to political campaigns, how to organize a D.C. trip and how to make phone calls to MOC's
- *Advocacy Tools*: video role play of a MOC phone call
- *Regional Advocacy Challenge*: plan a competition between regional associations for making the most phone calls, sending the most e-mails, or planning the most MOC meetings or factory visits

If you have any input regarding these ideas or have more of your own, please don't hesitate to send them our way at EmeA@ppai.org.

Questions or comments? E-mail us at EmeA@ppai.org or call 972-570-3282.