

How to Build Relationships with Decision Makers

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2023 ALL-GRANTEE MEETING

CULTIVATING COMMUNITY GROWING COLLABORATION

Speaker Disclosure

“I have no financial interests or relationships to disclose.”



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Who are Decision Makers?

- Mayors
- Town managers
- Selectmen
- Town or city councilors
- County commissioners
- Boards of Health members
- Conservation Commission members
- Planning Board members
- School Committee members
- Town, city, county, or regional planners
- Finance Board members
- County administrators
- Precinct representatives
- Congressman
- State Officials
- Family Representatives

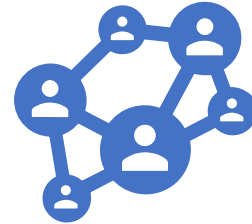


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What Exactly does it mean to form a relationship??



Refers to a working arrangement that will foster pleasant and effective two-way communication between you and the decision maker.



The relationship doesn't have to be highly personal, or a friendship



It needs to be one of mutual trust and respect, and to be based on mutual interest in a particular set of issues and on mutual benefit.



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Why are Relationships with Decision Makers Important?

- All politics, almost no matter how you define the term, comes down in the end to personal relationships.
- All of us listen particularly to those we know, like, and trust.
- We're more likely to agree with the one presented by someone with whom we have a good relationship.





Whom do you need to Develop a Relationship with?

- The short answer is.....EVERYONE POSSIBLE!
- Your own State and Federal Legislators
- Legislators to whom your issue is crucial
- Legislators who have a personal passion for your issue
- Don't forget about their Aides and staff

How do we meet Decision Makers?



Best is face to face



Phone calls



You can almost always meet with a state representative. In most states, legislative districts contain fewer than 50,000 people, so every voter is important.



In rural districts or small towns, you may be able to catch the representative when they pick up their mail at the post office



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So, I have a meeting... Now what?



Know what you want to talk about.

Be clear, concise, and focused on your issue. If possible, have a fact sheet



Identify the issue clearly.

Keep it simple.
Do not overload with excessive amount of information



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Who has time for a meeting?

Invite

Invite legislatures to your organization or town

Give

Give them a reason to come

- Ask them to speak
- Invite to be part of a focus group

Give

Give them a reason to come back

- Invite them back

Give

Give them a reason to remember you

- Give them a take-away- award, media, social network posts, etc.
- Thank them in person and by letter.



This sounds time consuming and complicated.....

Forming relationships takes time, energy, and focus on our part

Let's touch on Communication....



Phone



Text



E-mail



Social Media



Letter writing



In-person



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I have tried all of that and still can not connect with a Decision Maker....

10....

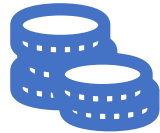


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Timing....



Know when budgets are prepared



Be on the look out for short term funding opportunities



Be a part of your “Day at the Legislature”



Best time to affect change is from the beginning

Be part of bill writing, if possible
Seek out legislature who are passionate about the issue



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Questions / Comments?

- What are some things you could do to build that relationship?



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