

Tips for an effective meeting: The six 'Ds'

Conducting an effective meeting with members of Congress requires preparing for the conversation by staying on message and doing so succinctly. Remember the six "Ds" to maximize your persuasiveness.

1. Discovery—Research your lawmaker to understand their interests. Reviewing their website, newsletters and social media accounts ahead of time will give you a sense of what issues are important to them.

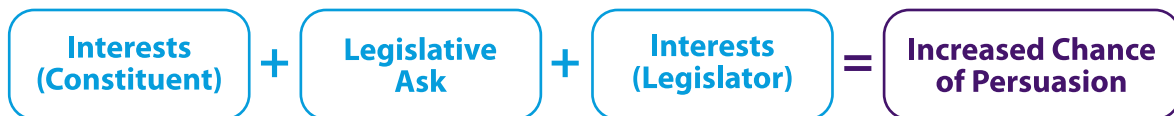
Tip: Their last 10 tweets could provide a sense of their most immediate concerns. Check it out.

2. Determine—What do you have in common with the lawmaker? How might the legislative ask appeal to the interests of the legislator or their constituents?

Tip: By doing the legwork and finding some common ground, you may find new ways to frame your ask that result in better advocacy outcomes.

3. Develop—Write out a conversation flow that includes your ask and key points you will make. Remember to frame the issue in a manner that relates to the legislator's interests.

Tip: Use the Key Interests-Based Advocacy formula below to guide your messaging:



4. Drill—Rehearse your ask and supporting arguments several times before the meeting. Be concise. Think about how to overcome any objections made by the office.

Tip: Consider recording audio or video of yourself on your smartphone to help refine your approach and align your body language.

5. Delve—Schedule and conduct your meeting, remembering to lead and close with your legislative ask.

Tip: Always try to secure a commitment from the office during your meeting, even if it's just to learn more about the issue, and share when you next plan to contact the office.

6. Don't Forget to Follow Up—Contact your state medical society staff (or the AMA) for answers to any unanswered questions raised during the meeting. Provide that information to the office right away and schedule your follow up with the lawmaker.

Tip: Not knowing the answer to any questions asked by your legislator provides a convenient opportunity to follow up with the office. Should you not know the answer to a question, assure the legislator that you will obtain that information and report back to the office.