Your Secret Advocacy Weapon: Your Board

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The Advocacy Guru

Topics

- Who’s Speaking
- A Word About Advocacy, Lobbying and Campaigning
- Board Connections
- Predictions for 2012!
Who’s Speaking?

Stephanie Vance
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Advocacy, Lobbying and Campaigning
Why Boards Matter

Keys for Identifying Potential Board Partners

- Think creatively about your audience and who influences them
- Develop your list based on that perspective
- Consider Benefits
  - Economic
  - Job creation
  - The kids and puppies rule
- Be Proactive: As turnover occurs, consider “willingness to engage in advocacy” as a criteria for appointment
Example: Mike Turner (R-OH)

- What we know about Turner

What would be his interests?

How to Find Existing Connections

- Ask!
  - Online survey tools
  - Update at next board meeting
- OpenSecrets.org
- Social Media Tools

Facebook
LinkedIn
Twitter
What Can Board Members Do?

- Identify a Board “Champion”
- Figure out who the group in question responds to and ask them to approach
- From the horse’s mouth approach (ask an elected official to help out)

Approaching the Board
Managing Concerns

- The “we can’t advocate” argument
- The “is it worth it?” argument
- The “politics are messy” argument
- The “they’re always against us” argument
- The “we don’t want to interfere with fundraising” argument
- The “we don’t know what to do” argument

Utilizing Board Members

- Identify strengths upfront (survey your board?)
- Create specific tasks based on strengths and goals
- Clear, detailed instructions
- Training and practice
- Motivation strategies
What to Avoid

- “Using” a board member’s connections without permission
- Asking an unwilling board member to be engaged
- Not training the board appropriately on outreach techniques

2012 Update (And a Prediction!)
Board Engagement Checklist

- Stack the deck (work to recruit an advocacy-oriented board)
- Find a board champion
- Provide clear, detailed instructions on what you’d like them to do
- Advocacy interest? (current and future board member)
- Know who you’re trying to influence and target relevant board members
- Find existing connections (such as a survey or using Facebook/Linked-in/Twitter)
- Ask an elected official or staff person to speak at a board meeting
- Put it on the agenda

- Provide a one-pager on why advocacy is OK
- Create a board intake form (what do they want to do? What are their strengths?)
- Create list of tasks: letters, phone calls, meetings, etc.
- Utilize AHCA resources for training (or create your own).
- Provide specific, clear instructions on what to do (sign up for AHCA’s advocacy alerts)

The Five Minute Action Plan

How are you going to use this information at home?