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## **Student Governance: Lobbying to Make Your Voice Heard**

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**Lobbying:** the act of attempting to influence decisions made by officials in the government, most often legislators or members of regulatory agencies. Lobbying is done by many different types of people, associations and organized groups, including individuals in the private sector, corporations, fellow legislators or government officials, or advocacy groups (interest groups). Lobbyists may be among a legislator's constituencies, meaning a voter or block of voters within his or her electoral district, or not; they may engage in lobbying as a business, or not.

The ethics and morality of lobbying are dual-edged. Lobbying is often spoken of with contempt, when the implication is that people with inordinate socioeconomic power are corrupting the law (twisting it away from fairness) in order to serve their own conflict of interest. But another side of lobbying is making sure that others' interests are duly defended against others' corruption, or even simply making sure that minority interests are fairly defended against mere tyranny of the majority. (Source: [www.Wikipedia.com](http://www.Wikipedia.com))

**A. Potential individuals, entities, or bodies that your student government may need to lobby:**

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**B. Current Hot Issues:**

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**C. Demands**

1. Leave no room for negotiation, moderation, collaboration, adjustment, etc.  
They are \_\_\_\_\_ propositions.

2. Instead, offer “suggestions of \_\_\_\_\_” or “opportunities for \_\_\_\_\_”.
3. Don’t \_\_\_\_\_.

**D. Civil Discourse**

American Social Psychologist and Professor at Swarthmore College (PA) Kenneth J. Gergen describes it as the “language of dispassionate objectivity”. Key components include:

1. Requires \_\_\_\_\_ of the other participants
2. Does not diminish the other’s \_\_\_\_\_ worth nor questions their good \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Avoids \_\_\_\_\_, direct \_\_\_\_\_, or excessive \_\_\_\_\_.
4. Keep \_\_\_\_\_ in check and \_\_\_\_\_!
5. Requires \_\_\_\_\_ and an appreciation of the other participant’s \_\_\_\_\_.

**E. Visionary Leadership**

1. A visionary leader sees \_\_\_\_\_ for change, how the world could be, and courses of \_\_\_\_\_ to make change.
2. Seek to change culture from \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_.
3. Have \_\_\_\_\_ on what the result you want.
4. Engage in \_\_\_\_\_.

**F. Working with Decision Makers**

1. Never \_\_\_\_\_. Integrity is all you have. Know your \_\_\_\_\_ and support and promote it even in the face of \_\_\_\_\_ from a decision maker.
2. Know what your position is, \_\_\_\_\_, and support it with facts, \_\_\_\_\_ evidence, and data. Be concise and focused.

You usually only get a few moments of \_\_\_\_\_  
 \_\_\_\_\_ with representatives and decision makers.

3. Search social media, \_\_\_\_\_, Wikipedia, and other sources to know what is being said about your issue. Decision makers and the opposition may \_\_\_\_\_ you while you are talking!
4. Why should the representative listen to you? Their favorite radio station: \_\_\_\_\_!
5. Make sure your representatives and decision makers know who you are all of the time, not just when you have a \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ issue. Do you know people who only come around when they need something? Don't be that to your reps. \_\_\_\_\_ a relationship with them. Offer on-campus office hours, for example.
6. \_\_\_\_\_ and help your decision makers any way you can. You may have a solution to a constituent problem. However, do not expect this to mean they are now " \_\_\_\_\_ \_\_\_\_\_", this is relationship building.
7. Don't \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, or lose your \_\_\_\_\_ with decision makers! They have the power to get you what you \_\_\_\_\_!

**G. The Opposition**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ with members of the opposition is of little benefit: they have their constituencies to represent, just as you do. Learn their positions so you can \_\_\_\_\_ them, but don't hope to sway them to your side.
2. Work your side, but be \_\_\_\_\_ of those on the other. Your adversary on one issue may be your \_\_\_\_\_ on another.
3. If someone on the opposition side chooses to make a \_\_\_\_\_ of themselves, get out of their way and let them!

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**H. Lobbying Realities**

1. Be prepared to start \_\_\_\_\_ in the day. Representatives are usually in their office before the session is called to order for the day, and it is hard to gain access to once they start on the scheduled business.
2. Part of the function of lobbying is to \_\_\_\_\_ representatives on an issue. Know both sides of it – because they will ask you to \_\_\_\_\_ your position to the opposition and/or ask about \_\_\_\_\_ of the other side’s position.
3. Lobbying is a process that should be \_\_\_\_\_, but understand that representatives are only going to get really interested in it when it is going to come before them in \_\_\_\_\_ or on the \_\_\_\_\_. Then they will have a sense of urgency.
4. Find a member of the body who is considered to be an \_\_\_\_\_ on the topic and provide them with info, talking points, etc. to support your position, even if they are not your representative. The other members will defer to their \_\_\_\_\_, whether real or only \_\_\_\_\_.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ to \_\_\_\_\_ is better than a handwritten or typed \_\_\_\_\_, a handwritten or typed letter is better than an \_\_\_\_\_, an email is better than a post on \_\_\_\_\_, social media is better than a \_\_\_\_\_, a phone call is better than doing \_\_\_\_\_ at all.
6. Understand that sometimes things move forward out of \_\_\_\_\_, to give the “\_\_\_\_\_” to someone else.
7. Just because your side did not \_\_\_\_\_ does not mean you were not heard. Take defeat \_\_\_\_\_ to preserve relationships for future issues. Calling \_\_\_\_\_ is never productive.