

To hire or not hire?

How a lobbyist can help or hurt an organization...and what you need to know.



Why Hire a Lobbyist?

- Hiring a lobbyist is an important step you, your organization or your company can take when you need to persuade an elected official, legislative body or government agency to support/oppose a given position.
- When to consider hiring a lobbyist?
 - **When you need results and you're unsure you can deliver**
 - **Cost effective**
 - **Knowledge is power**
 - **Relationships**
 - **Experience with government processes and procedures**
 - **Experience with marketing/PR/communications**
 - **Reputation**

Lobbyists...

- Maintain the contacts and have the knowledge and experience to bring your issue to key decision-makers, legislative committees, state agencies and municipal government entities.
 - Lobbying isn't just about contacting elected officials; it is about contacting the right elected official or agency department head.
 - Lobbyists can help you raise your issue's profile...make things happen.
- Are PAID advocates...and usually work for a number of clients.
 - Your issue likely won't be their only issue...does that matter?

What Makes for an Effective Lobbyist?

- Effective lobbyists do not need to rely on political contributions to make an effective point for your issue.
 - Remember, contributions may get you access...they never guarantee results.
- Always make sure that the lobbying firm you intend to employ believes in your issue.
 - Lobbyists shouldn't be "just a hired gun."
- Always question a lobbyist's motive and ability to present your issue.
- The most effective way to deal with a lobbyist is to do your homework...check their references and reputation. Then, see if a working relationship would be a "good fit."

Other Important Questions

- Can you afford one? Can you afford not to have one?
- Will my organization get adverse publicity by hiring one?
- Do I really need one? Can your issue be handled internally or as part of a coalition?
- Do you know what your opponents are doing?
- What is success?
- Is there a compromise position?