



What to do before, during, and after a meeting with a member or their staff

I want to first off take the time to thank all of guys for taking time out of your busy schedules to truly make a difference in the counseling profession.

Here are a few suggestions that are good to follow before your upcoming meeting with the member or one of their staff:

1. Schedule your meeting at least a week in advance with the Senator, or if he or she is not available, their staff that directly handles your issue.
2. Type out a brief outline of your talking points and send them to the person that you will be talking to.
 - a. The person that you will be talking will appreciate this because they will be better prepared to discuss your issue.
 - b. Also, this is another way of reminding them of your meeting
3. Call the member's office two days in advance of your meeting and reconfirm your appoint.
 - a. Reconfirm this appointment with the appropriate staffer, or if meeting the with the member, then reconfirm with their scheduler
4. If there are multiple people that will be speaking during the meeting, coordinate beforehand: the order in which everyone will speak, who will speak about certain issues, etc.
5. Carve out more than enough time, in order to insure that you and your group will arrive at the member's office at least 10 minutes in advance.
 - a. This is important because we don't ever want the member or their staff to think that we don't value their time

Here are a few suggestions that are good to follow during your meeting with the member or one of their staff:

1. Bring enough copies of your agenda to your meeting, so that everyone is attendance has one.
2. If applicable, acknowledge the member's support for your issue
3. When talking, be direct and to the point
4. When talking about specific legislation, refer to it by its official title and number (example: H.R. 3662: Mental Health Access Improvement Act of 2013)
 - a. Or if there is not a specific piece of legislation, then be direct how you the member can help your cause;
5. This is one of if not the most important parts of the meeting: During your meeting, Be sure to add personal accounts of how this piece of legislation affects: you, your family, or someone that you know
 - a. Also another important thing to remember during your meeting is that, YOU are the EXPERT on this issue and you will know more about it than the Senator or their staffer
6. At any point in the meeting feel free to ask any questions that you may have
7. At the end make sure and thank the member or their staffer for their time and suggest a follow-up meeting
 - a. Also, offer to send them any information that pertains to the issue

Here are a few suggestions that are good to follow after your meeting with the Senator or their staffer:

1. Send the member or the appropriate staffer a thank you letter
 - a. Either via letter or email
2. Please contact myself or someone on the Governmental Affairs team at the ACA about the meeting
3. Last but not least, stay in constant touch with the member and their staffer you spoke with.
 - a. This insures that there will be an open line of communication, if and when we would like to set up a meeting with them in the future.

Once again thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule! Please contact me after your visit and let me know how it went. Also, feel free to contact me with any questions you may have.