

Keys to a Successful Hill Meeting

The key to a successful meeting with a Congressional office is to keep in mind the purpose. Any visit should not be a one-shot meeting. Rather the primary objective should be to establish rapport, with other objectives being to make a request, obtain information, or provide material. The following suggestions will help you in achieving your objectives. If you have questions, contact ASA Director of Science Policy Steve Pierson: pierson@amstat.org; 703.302.1841.

Consider the Audience-

1. Most likely not a scientist.
 - a. Stick to broad themes.
 - b. Avoid scientific details.
2. Most likely to meet with staffer.
 - a. Don't misjudge influence of young staffers. They are your conduit to the Member and it may help if you acknowledge that.
 - b. Spend a minute or two breaking the ice. (Determine science/statistics background, if any. Where he/she grew up or went to college. ...)
 - c. Avoid lecturing; ask, listen.
3. Review the Member's bio, press releases and sponsored legislation at their website to look for "hooks" for your meeting.

Meeting Structure

1. Introductions:
 - a. State who you are or represent to establish why they should listen to you.
 - b. Thank:
 - i. Staffer for taking time to meet. (They have hectic schedules.)
 - ii. Member for past support or action.
2. Make the "Ask".
3. Make supporting arguments. Suggestions for effective and interactive meeting:
 - **Always include local angle.**
 - Be succinct. (Most meetings run 20-25 minutes.)
 - Take pulse to decide where to take meeting. (e.g., "Is this something the Congresswoman can support?")
 - Ask if the staffer has any questions.
 - If the Member has not been supportive in past, ask the staffer how to gain Member's support.
4. Wrap-up (Repeat "Ask", Gauge support, Thank again)

Follow-up: After the meeting,

1. Send an email to:
 - a. Thank them for the meeting and discussion.
 - b. Send additional materials that they may have requested.
 - c. Ask about reaction to your "ask".
 - d. Offer to be a resource (you may already have done this in the meeting).
2. Keep in touch with the staffer.
3. Consider a post on social media thanking the Member's office for meeting to discuss