

Politicians' Lobbying Preferences

Committee Bulletin, published by Client Solutions, conducted a survey of politicians, lobbying preferences in 1994 and again in 2006, with both surveys achieving representative response rates.

2006 Survey Summary

These are a selection of the results obtained from this research

Best place to meet

- Canberra (Parliament House) office (75%)

5 most common lobbying mistakes

- Not appreciating time constraints
- Ambit claims
- Wasting time on insignificant issues
- Lack of local electorate focus
- Misstating the facts

Top five industry/professional Special Interest Groups in Canberra

- Australian Medical Association
- Australian Chamber of Commerce and Industry
- Pharmacy Guild of Australia
- Australian Industry Group
- National Farmers' Federation

Do you resent opportunistic lobbying?

- No (63.1%)

For information on the complete survey results and report please contact the Client Solutions office on **02 6282 2471** or by email to **dkindon@client-solutions.com.au**

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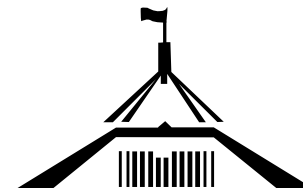
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LOBBYING TIPS



POCKET GUIDE TO LOBBYING

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Communicating with Politicians

Special Interest Groups (SIGs) should adopt a range of communication strategies, as single channel campaigns can often have limited effectiveness, as observed in the 1994 and 2006 surveys undertaken by Committee Bulletin on politicians' lobbying preferences.

Face to face meetings

Face to face meetings were selected by politicians as the most useful way of learning about a SIG.

Be alert for all opportunities to put your case to politicians but be aware that some may not like to be opportunistically lobbied.

Media

The media can be used as an effective tool to educate politicians about your organisation.

Letter writing campaigns

70% of respondents from the 2006 survey felt these had limited usefulness.

Advertising campaigns

68% of respondents from the 2006 survey felt they had limited effectiveness while 21% found them very effective.

Email campaigns

Email campaigns were selected as having the lowest effectiveness in the 2006 survey.

Committee system

SIGs need to monitor the committee system and become involved in inquiries which may affect them in order to increase their influence.

Meeting with Politicians

Contacting politicians

- Send a letter requesting a meeting that includes
 - > A brief outline of the issues you wish to raise
 - > A brief background on your organisation or delegation
- Send this as far in advance as possible (politicians are busy people and it is often hard to schedule appointments at short notice, especially on sitting weeks).

During the meeting

Meeting location

- Be flexible
- Be prepared to travel to Canberra

Time

- Appreciate politicians' time demands
- Be prepared, they may be called away from your meeting by Chamber or Party duties
- Do not go over your scheduled meeting time

Attendees

- Bring along a brief document outlining who you are and the issues you will be discussing, as politicians may attend these meetings alone and this will provide a record of the meeting to pass onto their staff.

Research

- Learn about who you are meeting - including their party, electorate, committees, and previous involvement with the issue.
- Know how to address them
- Make sure the issue is the responsibility of the jurisdiction you are approaching
- Be aware of the policy cycle
- Most importantly - know your facts

Presentation

- Set clear and realistic outcomes for the meeting
- Designate a key spokesperson from your delegation
- Organise and stick to your key messages
- Make sure you can deliver your key messages in 30 minutes as this may be all you get
- Don't provide too much detail in an initial meeting
- Don't use too much technical jargon
- Present solutions, not just problems
- Be careful not to be too demanding or pushy
- Try to present information with a local electorate focus

Follow up

- Thank the politician for their time
- Send a summary of what was discussed, outlining any actions that were agreed on
- Provide any requested follow up documentation
- Maintain regular contact and provide them with updates on the issue and your organisation

Politicians' Lobbying Tips

Here are some comments made by politicians on the mistakes made by SIGs in the 2006 Committee Bulletin survey of lobbying preferences.

Misunderstanding and lack of knowledge of Parliamentary process

Overstating their influence

Overstaying their timeframe

Presuming familiarity

Last minute appointments

Only putting their own, one sided argument

Not enough thought given to what the outcome they want from the meeting.