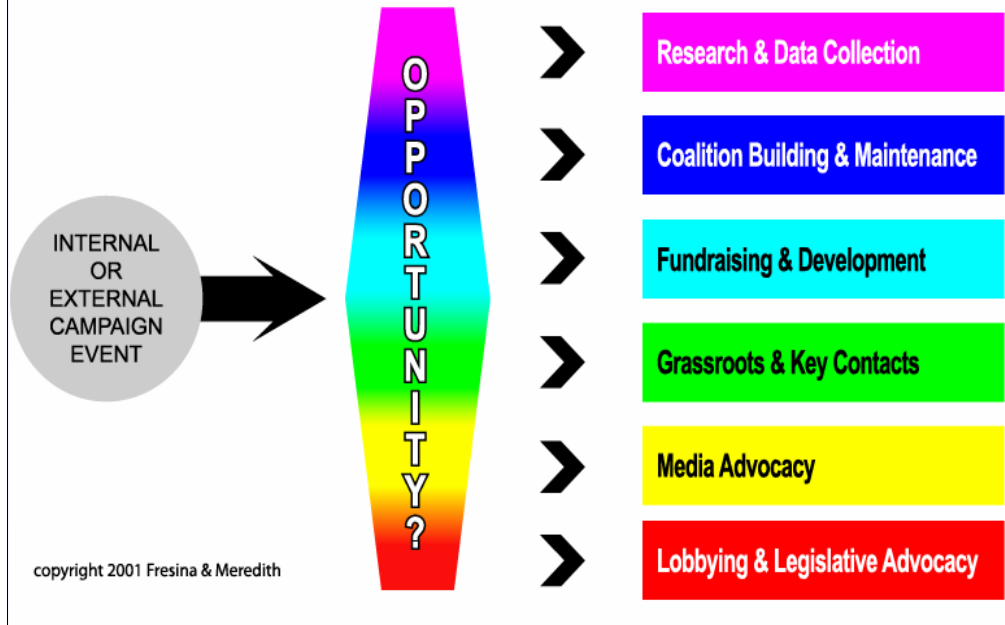




Advocacy, simply put, is the application of pressure on those persons or entities that have the power to give you what you want. The six tools outlined in the Power Prism are the essential ways in which we can apply such pressure.

# ADVOCACY POWER PRISM



## Questions to ask on:

# Research & Policy Analysis

- What info do you have or need to plan your advocacy goals?
  - Political research:
    - Do you have any recent public opinion--voter polling & focus groups on the problem and proposed solution options?
    - List who has the power and authority to give you what you want/need?
    - Describe your prospective opposition and assess their political power
  - Scientific research/data:
    - Are your policy goals data-driven?
    - Do you have relevant local, state and national data on human and fiscal impact of the problem and the solution?
    - What info does your opposition have?
- What power analysis do you have on all the stake holders?
  - Have you “Googled”, potential heroes, potential coalition partners, potential opposition, key media & grassroots to create “power profiles”?

## Research & Policy Analysis

- Get the facts that you need in order to support your position.
- Get the facts you need and the talking points to refute your opponent’s position.
- Facts can be derived from scientific data.
- Statistics about the scope of the problem; the potential impact of your “solution” and how such solutions can be employed are all essential.
- Research on voter support for your issue can help influence elected officials – the more local the better.
- Your research should include “power profiling”: How much can you learn about your legislative targets, their interests, affiliations and goals? Who do your grassroots activists know – lawmakers, the media, etc. and might they leverage those relationships on behalf of your campaign?

Questions to ask on:

## Coalition Building & Maintenance

- Based on MOTIVATED SELF-INTEREST
  - Are there other organizations that share your mission and your vision?
  - Are there other organization able to contribute resources (\$\$ or activists) and share power and credit? (and blame)
  - Are there other organizations that embrace your tactics and strategies as means for fulfilling their own mission and vision?

### **Coalition-Building & Maintenance**

- Coalitions are both a necessary evil and the land of opportunity of advocacy work.
- Coalitions attract organizations based on their motivated self-interest. They are made up of three types of organizations:
  1. Organizations that share a common *mission*.
  2. Organizations that share a common *vision*
  3. Organizations that embrace your *tactics and strategies* as means for fulfilling their own mission and vision. (i.e. Health care access organizations that see new tobacco tax revenues as means of funding expanded health insurance coverage for the poor.)
- Coalitions are hard. No matter how big they are, usually a very small handful of people do the bulk of the work. If the campaign is something that you or your organization REALLY cares about, consider becoming one of those two or three worker bees for the coalition. You'll have lots of work, but lots of power!
- Coalitions don't end with a long list of supporting organizations. They must be maintained. That means that we need to consistently look for opportunities to make member organizations feel more invested. Some ways of doing that are by providing template materials (newsletter articles, action alerts, etc.) for them to disseminate to their members. Also, look for ways to create public leadership opportunities for those organizations – write an Op/Ed for their Board Chair to author; invite their leadership/members to key meetings with lawmakers, etc.
- Coalition organizations should also be enlisted based upon their ability to influence lawmakers. If a target lawmaker is a Board member for a particular community-based organization, try to recruit them to your coalition...but remember – there needs to be something in it for them!

Questions to ask on:

## Fundraising & Development

- **Do you have 3 budgets - bare bones, just enough and fantasy?**
- **Do you a list of past, current and prospective funders to approach and share a well researched proposal?**
- **How do you value and stimulate in-kind contributions?**

### Fundraising & Development

- This is our Achilles heel in public advocacy.
- Advocacy campaigns and coalitions require money for infrastructure, staffing, collateral materials, research, lobbyists, media, etc.
- It's important to create two budgets:
  1. Bare bones – must-have – do or die budget
  2. Fantasy budget – what would you do to win your campaign if resources were not an issue?
- After the budgets are prepared, work with coalition partners to identify which things can be subsumed by in-kind contributions. Sometimes a coalition member organization may help absorb many of the campaign costs by making the campaign a top priority and devoting a bulk of staff and volunteer time to that campaign. Once those are clear; design a plan for raising money to pay for those unmet needs.
- Develop a “hot prospect” list for fundraising appeals including of foundations, corporations, non-profits, major donors and grassroots.

**Questions to ask on:**  
**Grassroots & Grasstops/Key Contacts**

- Who is your core constituency?
- Who is your target constituency?
- Where/how can you find them?
- How can you organize them?
- How can you connect them to relevant decision-makers?
- Do you have easy-to-reach grassroots & key contacts in all key voting districts?
- Could you find district captains in key districts?

**Grassroots & Key Contacts**

•Grassroots pressure is one of the most important resources we have – yet it is largely under-utilized.

•A Grassroots activist is a constituent – and ideally a voter.

•We are all grassroots in relation to those many elected officials who represent us whether as members of the city council, state senate, US Congress up to the president. We hire them through voting in their district and they respond to use based on our individual and collective power to employ them going forward.

•Lawmakers will tell you that a handful of calls/letters from their constituents on a particular issue gets them to sit up and take notice and makes that issue important to them.

•Grasstops or Key Contacts are those individuals that have a special relationship with elected officials by virtue of:

(1) their position (*maybe they are a big hoo-ha.....college president, physician, another lawmaker, CEO, Board member, political fundraiser, etc.*) or,

(2) their personal relationship to the decision-maker (*maybe they used to baby-sit the governor's Chief of Staff, or mow the senate president's lawn, or were the college roommate of the vice-president*). Either way, these Grasstops folks have personal or professional influence and enjoy a more direct line to the lawmaker and are more likely to get their calls answered in a timely manner.

Who is your core constituency?

- Real people who support your mission for personal or professional reasons.

Who is your target constituency?

- What "real people" in district would have greatest grassroots impact on target lawmaker?

- If lawmakers belong to certain organizations in community, does your grassroots base include

members from those organizations?

Where/how can you find them?

- Do some research on your legislative targets to find out what their core relationships/affiliations are.

Google is a good mechanism as are the government websites that may list lawmaker bios – campaign literature and position papers will also help you develop a PROFILE of your target lawmakers.

- Once the lawmaker PROFILE is developed, you should deliberately seek to expand your grassroots & grasstops base to include representation from those organizations/interests with which the lawmaker is affiliated. (I.e. if lawmaker is on board of local YMCA, try to enlist the YMCA into coalition and grassroots network. If lawmaker belongs to a particular faith community, try to engage that community and its leadership in your efforts. If a lawmaker graduated from a certain college, can you engage the college, other alumni, students?)

How can you organize them?

How can you connect them to relevant decision-makers?

- Brief grassroots on who their lawmakers are

Do you have easy-to-reach grassroots & key contacts in all key voting districts?

Do you have district captains in key districts?

Questions to ask on:  
**Media Advocacy**

- Do you have the tools to “do” media advocacy well?
  - How to’s of press releases, editorial board visits, media advisories, letters to the editor, etc.
- What are your key message points?
- Do you have relationships with key media?
- Do you have credible spokespersons for key topics?

**Media Advocacy**

- Media advocacy means getting your story into the section of the paper and news programs that decision-makers care about: above-the-fold-page-one; opinion pages; political pages/hard news programs, etc.
- How Media Advocacy is different than public relations, media relations, marketing & communications: Media Advocacy is not the “Big Hug”. Media advocacy seeks to create tension in order to influence a change in thinking which may, in turn, influence a change in action.
- Media advocacy does not always mean getting your name or your organization’s name in the paper.
- Media advocacy is often getting the media to ask the critical questions of decision-makers (their questions about your issue make your issue viable, real)
- Media advocacy is getting the media to editorialize in favor of your position.
- Media advocacy can include paid advertising and direct mail in order to inform voters of your position and urge action.
- Media advocacy requires the ability to create and identify points of tension/controversy/newsworthiness with your issue that are “sexy” enough to merit media coverage.

## Questions to ask on:

# Lobbying & Legislative Advocacy

- How much do you know about your legislative or administrative/regulatory targets?
- How will you get to know those targets, their key staff, etc?
- How much do your targets know about you?
- Have your legislative allies been briefed on pending campaign actions?
- Are you proactively created HERO OPPORTUNITIES for allies and would-be allies?
- Are you a “presence” in spheres of influence?

### **Lobbying & Legislative Advocacy**

•It's important that campaigns have access to professional lobbyists who can represent their interests at the capitol.

•Lobbyists are important for many reasons:

1.Lobbyists help you understand and navigate the legislative process. They can advise you as to the schedule and protocol of policy-making.

2.Lobbyists can generally facilitate your introduction to key lawmakers and staff. They will get you in the door, but you should be prepared to make your case.

3.Lobbyists know other lobbyists. They are tuned into the political rumor mill and can help position your issue within the broader context of the ever-changing political climate.

4.Lobbyists generally attend political fundraisers. Your personal resources may not allow you to attend many if any political fundraisers, but lobbyists tend to accept it as the price of doing business. Because their personal money is used for those contributions, that lobbyist arguably represents all clients in those settings. Also, your lobbyist may be able to get you in the door (for free) at some fundraisers to give you some meaningful face-time.

Legislative advocacy should be a top priority of coalition organizations and the grassroots. It's important that your issue is represented broadly throughout the legislative arena and you should make a point to develop strong trusting relationships with key legislative staff and committee staff as they often help the lawmakers set priorities and assess the value of issues.

•Campaigns can create a presence with lawmakers through things as simple as creating informative literature drops that target all lawmakers; lobby days, briefings, special reports, etc.



## What can the Power Prism model be used for?

- Campaign planning
- Campaign needs assessment (SWOT-style)
- Subcommittee functions
- Meeting agendas
- Budgets
- Evaluations
- Strategic Doing

## Key Advocacy "Power Tools"

- Research & Policy Analysis
- Coalition-Building & Maintenance
- Fundraising & Development
- Grassroots & Key Contacts
- Media Advocacy
- Lobbying & Legislative Advocacy

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