Top 10 tips: How to Advocate

1. Tell the whole truth. Tell the whole truth. Tell the whole truth – always!

2. Prepare – do your homework. How does the issue affect their district and their constituents, remember “All politics is local.”

3. Clearly know what you want. Frame the issue the way you want them to see it.

4. Strategize. Solidify your base and spend most of your energy convincing the undecided.

5. Relationships. Relationships. Relationships. It is the long-term basis of influence. It is not who you know that’s important, it is who you need to know.

6. Communicate. Use a combination of different communication tools such as: personal visits, letters, telephone calls, emails, letters to the editor, op-ed pieces (abbreviated for “opposite the editorial page”), public presentations, and newspaper or magazine articles. Remember to think local.

7. Be accountable! Do what you said you were going to do, when you said you were going to do it. Follow up is key.

8. Be their resource. Offer to provide them with the tools necessary to assist and keep them informed.

9. Understand how to compromise. Often times, a little is better than none.

10. Listen! Listen! Listen! Your ears are more important than your mouth. What does it take to get their support?

BONUS: Build alliances! Build coalitions! Reach out to those who share your same concern. Building coalitions could be the biggest impact EMB Ambassadors can make toward achieving advocacy initiatives and building relationships with elected officials

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