

LIBBY'S

FREE & EASY GUIDE TO COMMUNITY LOBBYING

A practical guide for people who want to make a difference ♦ 10 min read

*Lobbying is an art and a skill easily learned — and a great way to empower your supporters.**

| Why Lobby?

- ♦ It's easy to organize and sustainable — can be done multiple times at local or national level
- ♦ Activates your members and allies and demonstrates the power you have to bring about change
- ♦ De-mystifies the political process and shows how easily a successful intervention can be done

| First Steps

- Find out how many people are prepared to lobby — keep track!
- Define your specific issue and goal. Make it an **ACHIEVABLE** step in your bigger agenda.
- Brainstorm WHO to lobby. Make a specific list of possible people to lobby.
- Make a list of a manageable number of people to be lobbied based on the number of people you have on board to do the lobbying.
- Determine if there are allies or supporters inside already, who support you and can give you advice or ideas of other potential people to lobby.
- Plan logistics: one day? Over a week? Set deadlines and a coordination lead.
- Plan who is making contact with and lining up the people to be lobbied. Setting up the individual lobbying meetings is methodical and time consuming work and requires good planning to keep on top of it.
- **Prepare written materials — no more than two pages.** Describe who you are, your issue, and what change you're seeking. No info dumps.

- Train your lobbyists. Practice what you'll say. Assume 30 minutes per lobby meeting.

| The Art of Lobbying

- ◆ **Two people per lobby meeting** — one to speak, one to take notes. More feels like a pile-on.
- ◆ **Stick to your agenda** — no sidetracking. You don't have time.
- ◆ **Be cordial** — you are there to win allies, not alienate people.
- ◆ **Don't assume that the person being lobbied knows the issue as you do.** Keep it focused and know in advance what your specific ASK is for them to support. The more specific the better.
- ◆ **10 minutes max for your presentation.** Leave time for them to respond to you. But do not allow the person being lobbied to dominate the meeting — it's your meeting — or let themselves get sidetracked as a deflection or avoidance to use up your time! Politely intervene and bring it back to your agenda with something like, "that's interesting, but we'd like to focus on xxxx with the limited time we have with you in this meeting".

YOUR KEY GOAL

Get the person to actually AGREE TO DO SOMETHING so reasonable and manageable that they cannot refuse. Your foot in the door. One thing leads to another.

Know in advance what you want them to DO to support your ASK: Will they raise it in caucus? Write a letter to the Minister? Move or support a motion? Speak publicly? Issue a statement? Show support on social media? Gauge the conversation and ask accordingly.

You are aiming to build a RELATIONSHIP with the person, so as their trust and knowledge develops they will do more to help you win the change you are seeking. You are looking for the champion(s) inside who will be your allies and help you win your issue.

| After the Meeting

- Debrief ASAP with your group — gauge support, identify allies, note follow-up
- Write a brief thank-you and reiterate what was agreed to
- Follow up after a week: "Were you able to get that info?"
- Report back to your group to keep people engaged and active

x DON'T

Overload people with your entire agenda in one meeting
Expect an instant win or become disillusioned if it doesn't happen right away

✓ DO

Make your ASK specific and doable — then build from there
Empower your people by showing that engaging in the process makes a difference

Our voices count. Community lobbying makes a crucial difference.

*Note: Governments routinely require paid lobbyists to be registered, however volunteer community lobbying is usually not included. Verify your specific situation as needed.

For more about Libby Davies and to find other Free and Easy Guides, visit www.groundandsky.org

For a deep dive into Libby's approach to bringing about transformative change read her book "[Outside In: A Political Memoir](#)". Available at your local bookstore or library.