



Public Involvement

Objectives: At the end of this session each participant will:

- **Understand the importance of good relations with the news media**
- **Know the value of special interest groups**
- **Understand the upside of politics**
- **Know the value of information exchange meetings**
- **Know the keys to conducting effective meetings**

Our Obligations to the Public

1. To inform a broad segment of the public of the stake they have in an issue



2. To clearly inform the public how they can have an impact on the outcome of an issue



3. To systematically target the publics to insure the representation in the decisions that affect them.

Our Grandkids

Taxpayers

Special Interests

Local Citizens

Adj. Landowners

Politicians

Project Visitors

Business Owners

4. To listen...

Be Pro-active - You Take the Lead



**Don't Wait
Until You Have A Problem**

Be Pro-active



- ◆ Encourage participation
- ◆ The public must believe they can have an impact
- ◆ You set the climate



The Silent Majority

- ◆ Don't overlook them
- ◆ Diverse opinions
- ◆ Not a fixed class of people
- ◆ Can become a very vocal majority

The Silent Majority

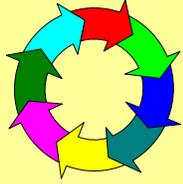
- ◆ They may feel adequately represented by a leader.
- ◆ The issue may not impact them.

The Silent Majority



The Issues

Make sure everyone understands the stake they have in decisions. They may not realize they have one.



Working with Other Agencies

Good relations are essential.

Understand the organizations and their agendas.

Explain their stake in the decisions.

Understand and respect their limitations.

Political Publics



- ◆ Do your homework
 - ◆ Deal only in the facts you know
 - ◆ They are busy too



Explain their Stake in the Decision

Tell them how they are affected

Let them know you have the pulse of the people

Let them know you have public support

Let them know they need you



Use the Politician's Staff



Get to know them on a first name basis

They can get much of what you want and need done



District Procedure for Congressional Contacts

If they contact you:

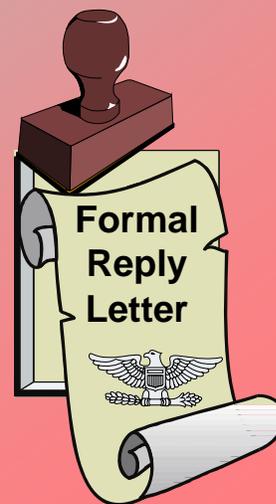
- Provide information and help solve problems
- Report the contact and what occurred to your boss
- Already know what your boss needs/wants to know
- Solve any problem that you can at your level
- These relationships keep congressionals to a minimum



Replies to Written Congressionals

Send draft information to District for reply

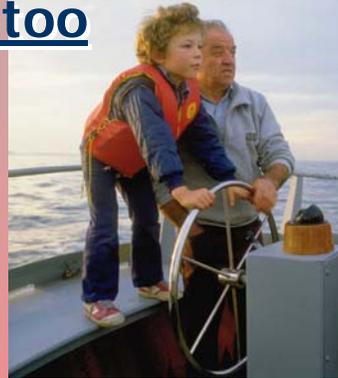
Formal reply will be signed by the District Commander



Politicians are Human too

They have the same feelings we do

They have similar values



Always show your appreciation for things they have done for you

Find something on a personal level

News Media



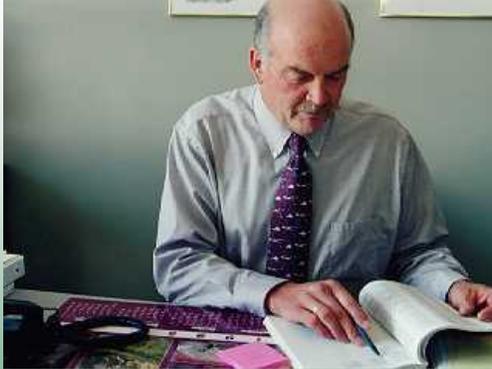
Show Video Tape - Interview Demonstration

News Media

- ◆ If they come to you it is usually for factual project information or a conflict is brewing
- ◆ Get to know the reporters, they always hold the trump card
- ◆ Understand where they are coming from
- ◆ Cooperate with them



When asked for an interview



- ◆ Ask if they are on a deadline
- ◆ Know the subject of the interview
- ◆ Go over questions with the reporter before the interview
- ◆ Make notes on possible questions and prepare appropriate answers

Determine what point you want to make and how you are going to make it before they arrive.



When Being Interviewed...

DO



Accent positives and downplay negatives

Let the reporter finish before you respond

Be forthright but seize the opportunity to interpret rather than respond directly

Call the reporter by name

Keep it simple

Interview Don'ts

- X** Don't repeat the question before you answer
- X** Don't shout or talk in an unusual tone
- X** Don't use jargon and acronyms
- X** Don't get into hypothetical situations
- X** Don't become provoked or lose your cool
- X** Don't say more than is necessary
- X** Never lie and don't say "no comment"

Giving an On-Camera Interview

- ◆ Look at the interviewer, not the camera



- ◆ Smile every chance you get
- ◆ Relax
- ◆ Dress appropriately

- ◆ It doesn't last as long as it seems

PUBLIC MEETINGS



Community Involvement

Show Video Tape -

**Temple Lake Park
Meeting and Citizen's
Committee**

Planning the Meeting

- ◆ **Determine the purpose of the meeting**
- ◆ **Design the meeting to fit the purpose**
- ◆ **Make sure all appropriate groups and individuals are advised or invited to the meeting**

The Day of the Meeting



- ◆ Be there early
- ◆ Know your audience

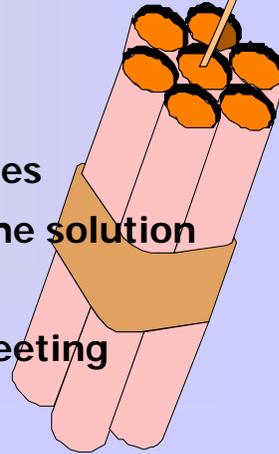
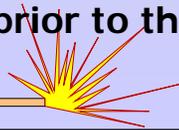
- ◆ Have your staff check and double-check the equipment, props, etc. Come self-contained if possible.

Conducting the Meeting

- ◆ If possible have someone take notes
- ◆ Set the ground rules so that all may participate
- ◆ Be responsive and try to relieve tensions
- ◆ Appear relaxed and be sincere
- ◆ Pay attention to your audience
- ◆ Don't let yourself be drawn into an argument
- ◆ Always summarize & relate what will be the next step

Hostile Audiences

- ◆ You are not the target
- ◆ Avoid defensiveness
- ◆ Be a facilitator
- ◆ Avoid symbols of power
- ◆ Set ground rules
- ◆ Use active listening techniques
- ◆ Speak to the problem...not the solution
- ◆ Use humor
- ◆ Relieve stress prior to the meeting



After the Meeting...



Meet with your staff for comment and evaluation to determine the effectiveness of the meeting

FOLLOW THROUGH with any commitments made to the public

Citizen's Committees



A variety of names:

- Work group
- Task force

General Principles for Citizen's Committees



- ◆ Clearly define their limits of authority
- ◆ Establish the life of the committee
- ◆ Establish the rules
- ◆ Represent the full range of values in the community-select a good cross section

Functions of a Citizen's Committee

- ◆ Sets planning priorities
- ◆ Serves as a communications link
- ◆ Resolves conflict among the various interests
- ◆ Reviews & makes recommendations on budgets



Other Functions of the Committee

Designs and evaluates the public involvement program

Reviews press releases

Helps host and participates in public meetings



Benefits of a Citizen's Group

Acts as a sounding board

+ Serves as a guidance group

+ Is a channel of communication

= A strong advocate of
ownership and recognition

More Committee Benefits....

- Provides a variety of expertise

- May be a source of volunteers

Tree planting

Trail building

Campground hosts

Clean-up activities

- May foster cost sharing partners

Wetlands

P.L.A.D.





Questions?

Comments?

The End



Thank you...
Thank you very much.