

Advocacy Primer

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Who's In the Room?



Objectives...

- Give examples of different types of advocacy museums can engage in
- State key differences between lobbying and advocacy



Objectives...

- Describe different types of advocacy tools/approaches, and their benefits
- Develop ideas for advocacy activities on issues important to the field/community



What is advocacy?

"Advocacy is a broad term covering a range of activities that seek to bring about systemic social change."

~ About Nonprofit Advocacy, Independent Sector
www.independentsector.org/advocacy

What is Advocacy, Really?

Advocacy is sometimes...

...in direct support of or opposition to a specific bill, law, referendum, or ballot measure (pending or proposed)

This is lobbying

It is just *one type* of advocacy.

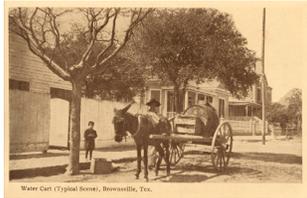


What is Advocacy, Really?

Advocacy is not...

...direct service. For example:

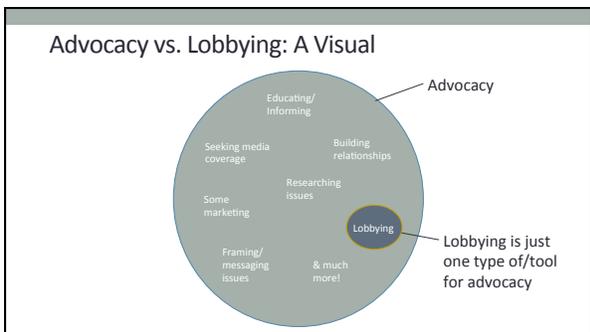
- teaching a visitor how to use the Internet for research
- offering an art history or STEM class to local school children
- digitizing documents or photographs



Water Cart (Typical Home), Brownsville, Tex.



So, are you engaged in advocacy?



Advocacy versus Lobbying

Advocacy <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Different approaches to educate and inform on important issues<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ NOT tied to influencing legislation• Includes:<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ Educating policy makers/media/public➢ Building relationships with policy-makers over time• No limits to advocacy in the broad sense described here <p>↓</p> <p>GOAL: Educate lawmakers or public about issues important to your mission/those you serve.</p>	Lobbying <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Communication intended to influence specific legislation (pending or proposed law or bill)• Two types:<ul style="list-style-type: none">➢ Direct: You directly contact lawmakers➢ Grassroots: Ask supporters to contact lawmakers (Call to Action)• 501c3 allowed to do to an "insubstantial" degree; rules for public employees vary by state. <p>↓</p> <p>GOAL: Influence passage or defeat of legislation</p>
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Sources: mpowfoundry.org/resource/test-facts-about-advocacy-lobbying and cancerstown.org/CC/files/d/cdoc820-244-4209-quad-73835d862bc.pdf

Know the Rules

If you are an employee of a public agency, check your State Board of Election site for more information, and/or discuss with your legal or government affairs team. You are likely restricted in terms of what's allowed, and it varies by state.



Activity...

- Write one reason Advocacy is important
- When done, stand up, push in your chair, and wait for instruction

INSTRUCTIONS:

- Find someone to share your idea with
- Swap notes and find someone else
- Lather, rinse, repeat
- When I say "FREEZE," stop and share an idea out loud

We advocate to...

- Advance our mission
- Assure important issues are on the table
- Ensure ability to continue our work
- Safeguard a favorable funding/operating environment
- Cultivate supporters for help
- Help the voiceless
- Ensure equitable access to services/resources
- Prevent policies that hurt us/our communities
- Change hearts and minds
- Drive positive change in society
- Make sure "sides"/aspects of issues are being presented/considered

Who can/should advocate?

“There is a mystique surrounding advocacy – that you have to be an expert on your issue, or an expert in the way the process works. Not so.

Advocacy is like anything else: beginners are not expected to know as much as professionals, and the more you do it the easier it gets.”

Nancy Amidei, in *So You Want to Make a Difference: Advocacy is the Key!*
From: councilofnonprofits.org/nonprofit-advocacy-easy

Who can/should advocate?

- Institutional Leadership/CEO
- Staff
- Coalitions/networks
- Professional associations
- Board members
- Friends groups
- Other passionate stakeholders



Help Advocates Help You...

You may need to:

- ASK them to help
- Educate them how
- Provide the proper tools



“If you care about an issue,
then you can be an advocate.”

From Stand for Your Mission, “What You Need to Know”

Other Tools...

- Research & analysis of issues
- Stakeholder analysis/mapping
- Issue messaging
- Educating public/stakeholders
- Mobilizing networks and coalitions
- Media Advocacy (Public Relations)
- Building relationships with lawmakers



Activity

- Research & analysis
 - Stakeholder analysis/mapping
 - Messaging
 - Educating public
 - Mobilizing networks
 - Media Advocacy
 - Relationships with lawmakers
1. Divide into small groups (2-4 people)
 2. Choose advocacy goal
 3. Identify ways to use **each approach** toward your issue

Assessment

- ACT! Quick assessment
- Should take 10-15 minutes to complete
- First, read FAQs
- Please answer candidly and honestly




**KEEP
CALM
AND
DEBRIEF**

Discuss with a Partner:

- For an indicator that you are **strong** in...
 - Why are you strong in that indicator?
 - Have you invested in it?
 - Do you have staff/board strong in that area?
- For an indicator that you are **weak** in...
 - Why are you weak in this area?
 - What would it take to build your capacity in this area?
 - Are there partners/coalitions to help you strengthen this area without building the capacity in-house?

“Successful advocacy does not require stepping into the quagmire of partisan politics. It simply means **using our voices as committed and informed champions** for our missions.

Speaking the truth in a calm but unwavering voice. Reminding decision-makers of our **shared values and beliefs**.

Sharing tested solutions to community problems. Helping community leaders understand the **impact of their decisions**.

But more than anything else, it requires **standing for what we know to be true**. It requires using our voices.”

Stand for Your Mission DISCUSSION Guide

Where do I start?

1. **Engage in a conversation about advocacy** and how decisions outside your organization influence your mission.
2. **Educate staff/supporters** about key issues that influence your organization’s work.



Where do I start?

- 3. Understand **activities you ARE** or are **NOT** allowed to do.
- 4. **Identify gaps in your advocacy capacity** and steps to address them.
- 5. **Join groups that monitor advocacy issues** that might support or threaten your mission.



Reflection & Commitments to Action

- What is ONE ISSUE area you will engage in further advocacy efforts?

- What is ONE ACTION you will take to strengthen your advocacy efforts in the next 3 months?

- Who will you share this information with?

“Start where you are;
use what you have;
do what you can.”

Arthur Ashe
