Building Partnerships and Networks with the Legislature and Government Personnel

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Being Effective

How can you best help the person or group you are dealing with while at the same time advancing your own unit’s best interests?
External Constituents

• Care deeply about higher education, but limited understanding of how it functions
  • Structure
  • Operation
• Inform or remind them of things you may take for granted
  • Give concrete examples of your role(s)
    • Provide a context for your conversation
External Constituents

• May apply models familiar to them which may not apply to higher education
  • E.g. What is academic freedom?
  • E.g. What is tenure and how does it work?

• Result may be that you have to:
  • Justify your programs, personnel, etc.
  • Explain higher education values

• Do not appear defensive or frustrated, seize the teachable moment
External Constituents

• Explain or frame the issues
  • Advantages that matter most to them
  • Direct relevance to their world

• Explain your mission in ways that they will most readily appreciate and value
  • Adding to our community’s intellectual, economic, social and cultural capital
External Constituents

• Listen attentively to them
  • 80% listening, 20% explaining
  • Understand how you are perceived
  • Learn about their goals, priorities, aspirations…
  • How can you address their needs?

• Keep administration informed re: your conversations/meetings
  • Avoid them being blindsided
  • May require follow-up
External Constituents

- It is all about building relationships!
  - Trust
  - Resource
  - Responsive
  - Accurate
  - Mutually Beneficial (Symbiosis)

- It takes time and effort
  - Consistency
  - Patience
  - Gratitude