

What's your line?

Crafting a politically smart message

OLA Annual Conference 2013

Communicating your message to your audience relies on your knowledge of both. It also relies on establishing relationships before you need them and supporting them after you use them. Here are some tips for thinking about your message and building an audience for it.

1. What is the issue: what is the issue, opportunity, challenge, that you want to share?
2. Who is the audience: how does this impact them and their constituency?
3. What is the message: what's important to them, and how can you best share that specific information?

Examples of small ways to build the relationship:

- Invite someone to tour your library
- Invite someone to special events at your library
- Welcome packet for newly elected officials, etc.
- Visit a legislator in his/her home office
- Attend open houses, town hall meetings, etc
- Serve on committees, volunteer for events that will put you in contact with an elected
- Follow news on library issues, and watch for opportunities to email or call your elected
- Wear your library name badge around town
- Thank someone publicly through news releases, at events, at library meetings
- Thank someone privately through an email, thank you card

Resources

- **Turning the Page:** This is PLA's advocacy training program that can be helpful. <http://www.ala.org/pla/education/turningthepage>
- ALA's advocacy web site is a bit chaotic, but has good resources on issues and messaging. <http://www.ala.org/advocacy/>
- OLA's Legislative Committee posts explanations of current issues facing Oregon libraries on its web page. <http://www.olaweb.org/mc/page.do?sitePageId=63286>

Your communication counselors:

Carol Dinges: cdinges@ci.lebanon.or.us

Janet Webster: janet.webster@oregonstate.edu

Aletha Bonebrake: alethaboneb@msn.com

What's Your Line?

EXAMPLE:

Issue: Funding for early literacy

Audience: Your state legislator

Message: Support Senate Bill 123

Who cares about the issue in your community? _____

How might you build this relationship ahead of time? _____

How might you ask for support on this issue? _____

Your issue:

Audience (s):

Message (Your Line):

Relationships to build:

Ways to ask for support:

Your issue:

Audience (s):

Message (Your Line):

Relationships to build:

Ways to ask for support: