

# Effective Advocacy in Tallahassee: What You Need to Know

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## 1. Making Introductions:

- Refer to them as Representative or Senator, even if you know them personally outside the official setting
- State your name, that you are part of United Way, **and** what company you represent
- Depending on time frame, we can spend a few minutes talking about why United Way is in Tallahassee

## 2. Short Time Frame:

- Appointments are scheduled between committee hearings and chamber sessions and we will normally have only 5-15 minutes

## 3. Be Brief with a Specific Ask:

- State the case for the visit in 2-3 brief sentences
- Follow with a specific ask
- Depending on the issue, you may leave behind the one page issue brief (which they do not typically read)

## 4. Importance of Legislative Aides:

- The most important person to know in Tallahassee
- The official gatekeeper of information and visitors
- Often more knowledgeable of the issues, bills and legislator's schedule, than the legislator
- The official spokesperson and right hand of the legislator
- Always has the ear of the legislator; what is said to them, is said to the legislator

## 5. Know the Legislator's Bio

- Prior to meeting, know something of legislators background, i.e., how long in office, other elected positions, assigned committee, bills sponsored, personal info