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Developing Your Advocacy Plan

Create Your Advocacy Plan

1. Start with an action plan and budget. Appoint a coordinator and assign tasks. A plan will help ensure a bigger bang for your buck by helping you use your resources strategically.
2. Get the whole library “family” involved—all staff, trustees and Friends. Make sure everyone understands the rationale and has an opportunity to give input.
3. Be enthusiastic and positive. Let those you are seeking to involve know they can help make a difference.
4. Talk about users’ needs—not the library’s. If seniors need large-print books or students need more computers, focus on those needs and what the library needs to address them.
5. Break tasks into bite-sized pieces. For those who are “too busy” but want to help, have a “to do” list to choose from, such as attending one school board meeting, writing a letter to the editor or making one phone call to a key official.
6. Build a database of supporters with names, addresses, telephone numbers and e-mail addresses. Create an e-list to keep them informed of both successes and setbacks.
7. Support your supporters. Provide message sheets, tips and other materials to help them speak out. Train them in public speaking, media and legislative skills.
8. Reach out to influential people in the community. Meet with key leaders and officials to educate them about library concerns and invite their support. Ask to speak to civic, campus and other organizations.
9. Distribute campaign information both in and outside the library—in the teachers’ lounge, student union, bookstores, coffee shops, wherever people are likely to see and read it.
10. Thank and recognize your supporters at every opportunity!

Putting it on Paper – Your Action Plan

Before you put your plan on paper, think carefully about what you hope to achieve. Is it more money? A new law or policy? Are you trying to defeat a particular proposal or piece of legislation? Pass referenda? What will it take to make it happen? Here are some more questions to think about.

- What groups or individuals are currently most supportive of your library?
- What key decision-makers would you like to have on your side?
- List the ways that trustees, Friends, staff and other supporters could:
 - Initiate contacts
 - Expand contacts
 - Renew contacts
- If you could escort one person through the library tomorrow, who would it be, and why?
- How would you demonstrate that the library has a positive impact on the community?
- What are three points you would make to key leaders to gain their support?
- What public relations tools (brochures, fact sheets, etc.) will you need to help build your case?

Use the *Developing Your Action Plan Worksheet* below to map out your advocacy strategy.

Developing Your Action Plan Worksheet

What is the goal of your campaign?

What are your objectives?

What are the key messages? (10-15 words)

Who is the audience?

Why is this important to them?

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
-

What do we want the audience to:

1. Think?
 2. Feel?
 3. Do?
-

Three supporting points:

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
-

Examples, stories, and facts that support this message:

- 1.
 - 2.
 - 3.
-

How will we determine the success of our campaign?
