

10 simple rules to follow when meeting a politician

1. **Be clear about the purpose of the meeting.** Clarity about your objectives will help set the tone for the meeting. Express appreciation for the visit and immediately state why you are there.
2. **A lobby meeting is a conversation.** Do not give a lecture. The conversation should flow back and forth. It is important to express your views, but to listen as well. Be concise.
3. **When it comes to influencing politicians, anecdotes trump data.** Anecdotes personalize an issue and resonate with a politician far more than even the most carefully reasoned argument. As academics this can be difficult but try to support your views with personal stories.
4. **Stick to the basics.** Keep your conversation focused on a few basic points. The more complicated and convoluted your message, the greater the chance the conversation will wander into uncharted territory, which can give the Parliamentarian an out.
5. **Keep the conversation on track.** Do not let your conversation wander to other unrelated issues. If the politician you are lobbying tries to change the topic, gently return to your main point.
6. **Do not lose your temper.** In some rare cases, you may find a politician that is simply unresponsive or even openly hostile to your concerns. Do not engage in a heated exchange. Sometimes it is ok to just listen to a politician that you disagree with – reporting back their perspective to CAUT can be very valuable for future meetings. At the end, respectfully reiterate your key points, thank the politician for the opportunity to speak and end the meeting.
7. **Get a commitment.** Ask your politician to do something concrete to show support for your issues. They could ask a question or make a statement in Parliament or raise your concerns at the party caucus meeting.
8. **Do not be intimidated.** Remember, you are the expert. In most cases, your politician will have only a general understanding of post-secondary education issues.
9. **If you cannot answer a question, do not try.** If during your meeting a politician asks you something you cannot answer, do not make up a response. Instead, tell the politician you do not know the answer, but you can find out and will follow up after the meeting.
10. **Remember to follow-up.** Once the meeting is over, your lobbying efforts should not end. Post a tweet on social media and include @CAUT_ACPPU and #cdnpse. Be sure to send a letter to express gratitude for the meeting. You may want to extend an invitation to your campus, to meet with your association executive, or to attend any special meetings or events you have may have planned. Please cc. CAUT.



CAUT Parliament Hill Days

Lobby Day Checklist

Before the Meeting

1. Review the background and briefing documents, as well as the MP's biography.
2. Connect with the other lobby delegates taking part in your meeting ahead of time to establish who will take the lead on each topic, the order in which group members will speak, and who will complete the "Lobby Report" after the meeting.
3. A CAUT staff member will open the Zoom call and monitor for any issues. Have your personalized itinerary on hand and note the staff member and their contact information should you require troubleshooting during the meeting.

At the Meeting

1. Introduce yourselves to the MP and/or their staff.
2. Make a short statement about CAUT's key messages and position and reinforce that argument with local stories and experiences.
3. Time is limited, so try to stay in control of the meeting. Do not get sidetracked by the MP or staff who are in attendance. Stick to the issues you asked to discuss first and foremost.
4. Try to get a commitment from the MP before the end of the meeting. Make sure any commitments are mutually understood, including those made by you to follow up.
5. Ask the MP for a photo with your lobby group. Take a screen shot. Share it on social media, including the handle @CAUT_ACPPU and using the hashtags #cdnpse. If not on social media, you can also email it to keller@caut.ca
6. No matter the results of your meeting, please be sure to thank the parliamentarian and their staff for their time.

After the Meeting

1. Connect with the other lobby delegates who took part in your meeting. Share your impressions of the meeting and determine what, if any, follow-up action is required and who will do it.
2. A virtual "Lobby Report" will be sent to you. Please complete the report while the meeting is fresh in your mind.
3. Inform your membership about Parliament Hill Days. Share your experience through an op-ed, email blast, or social media.



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