

# ***You Got This: A Blueprint for Successful Meetings on Capitol Hill***

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# What We'll Cover:

- Why Hill Day?
- Your Superpower: Storytelling
- Successful Meetings on the Hill
- The Worst that Could Happen

# Goals of Hill Day:

- Educate policy makers and staff about PAs and your role in healthcare and in your community.
- Build support for the PA profession and for the policy priorities we're advocating.
- Establish new (and strengthen existing) relationships with legislators and staff.
- Grow your advocacy skills and have fun!

# The Big 3: Why PAs/Students Must be Advocates

- If not you, then who? The only people who will speak up for PAs and PA students...are PAs and PA students!
- If you're not at the table, you're on the menu
- You make it local, relevant, personal, and understandable. So, who's the real expert??

*Hint:* 



# What Legislators Want to Know\* (And Why You're the Best Person to Tell Them)

- What actions do **constituents** want me to take?
- Why do **constituents** want me to do that?
- What are the impacts of this on **our community or state**?
- What are **constituents'** personal stories or connections to the issue?

***What do these questions have in common?***

\*per Congressional Management Foundation

# Can One Person *REALLY* Make a Difference?



- You are a PA and a constituent
- Constituents > Lobbyists!
- The work you do is extremely important, your *perspective and expertise* are very valuable
- Together we can create positive change

# Story Telling: The Advocate's Superpower

## Story-telling:

- Provides an instant connection, emotional impact
- Brings PA practice to life
- Makes issues local and relevant
- Gives legislator reason to become a champion
- Differentiates your meeting *from every other meeting that day*



# Blueprint for Successful Meetings

## 1.) Introduce yourselves

- “I am a PA (or PA student), and I work [where] in [what town] in your district/state”
- Offer “quick and dirty” overview of profession
- Define profession by description
- Say thanks (if a cosponsor last year – see list)

# Blueprint for Successful Meetings

## 2.) Introduce the issue

- “Today we’re here to talk about an issue that is very important to PAs from our district/state”
- **What** (including bill #), **why**, **how**
- Have a plan, be concise
- Stay on message

# Blueprint for Successful Meetings

## 3.) Make it personal, local (*story time!*)

- Connect the dots to constituents, community
- Share state profile to illustrate impact
- Personal anecdotes, examples
- Speak from your heart
- YOU make the issue relevant
- “Tell me why I should remember/highlight THIS issue over the 27 others I will hear about today.”

# Blueprint for Successful Meetings

## 4.) Make a clear ask

- Say what you want the Member to do: “we’re here to ask for your support – please cosponsor and help to pass S. 1986 / HR 1956 and HR 6087”
- Ask what additional information you can provide to help them decide
- Offer to follow-up, especially if staff have asked questions or “need time to talk to the boss”

# Blueprint for Successful Meetings

## 5.) Wrap it up: offer thanks and future contact

- Always end on a positive note
- Offer to be a resource in the district
- Restate any outreach/follow-up you will do after the meeting
- Thank them for their time and consideration

# Nuts and Bolts

- Materials
  - Leave-behind – BLUE folder
    - ONE per MEETING
    - Designate one person for each group to pick up additional folder(s) at reg desk
    - Insert one state profile (on your tables)
  - Background (just for you!) – RED folder
- Masks: recommended on Metro; check App for Hill office requirements

# Nuts and Bolts, con't

- Hill Day App
- Should have downloaded it already
- Check schedule
- Check Instructions →
- Report Back!
- Use paper form or e-form on App

The screenshot shows a mobile app interface for a meeting. At the top, the time is 3:42. Below the time, there is a "Back" button and the title "Meeting". A profile picture of Rep. Lloyd Doggett is shown next to his name and the text "Rep. Lloyd Doggett (D) [TX-35]" and "Thursday, Sep 29th 2022 1:00 PM EDT". Below this is a map showing the location of the meeting at 45 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington DC, 2307 Rayburn House Office Building. The map includes labels for "United States Capitol", "United States Botanic Garden", and "Libra Cong". Below the map, the address is repeated: "45 Independence Avenue, SW, Washington DC 2307 Rayburn House Office Building". A red arrow points from the "Check Instructions" item in the list to the meeting details. Below the address, there is a note: "\*\*The office asks that you wear a mask for the duration of this meeting.\*\*". Below the note, there is a request to dial a number: "Please dial this number when you arrive at the horseshoe building entrance of Rayburn on S Capitol St SE: 202-225-4865". Below the request, there is a statement: "A staff member from the office will escort you to your meeting." Below the statement, there are three sections: "Attendees" with a person icon, "Talking Points" with a microphone icon, and "Documents" with a folder icon. At the bottom, there are two checkboxes: "Member Attended" and "Only Staff Attended", both with empty checkboxes. At the very bottom, there is a blue navigation bar with icons for "Meetings", a building icon, a speech bubble with a red "3" notification, a group of people icon, and a menu icon.

# The Realities of Capitol Hill

- You might meet in a stairwell, hallway, cafeteria, or right there in the office waiting area
- There may be bells (don't be "alarmed")
- Buildings can be confusing – ask for directions
- Tricky floorplans (hundreds-place number is the floor)
  - Cannon: 100, 200, 300
  - Longworth: 1100, 1200, 1300
  - Rayburn: 2000, 2100, 2200, 2300
- Devices, C-SPAN/TV, other advocates = distractions abound
- Staff look surprisingly young

# Reminder:

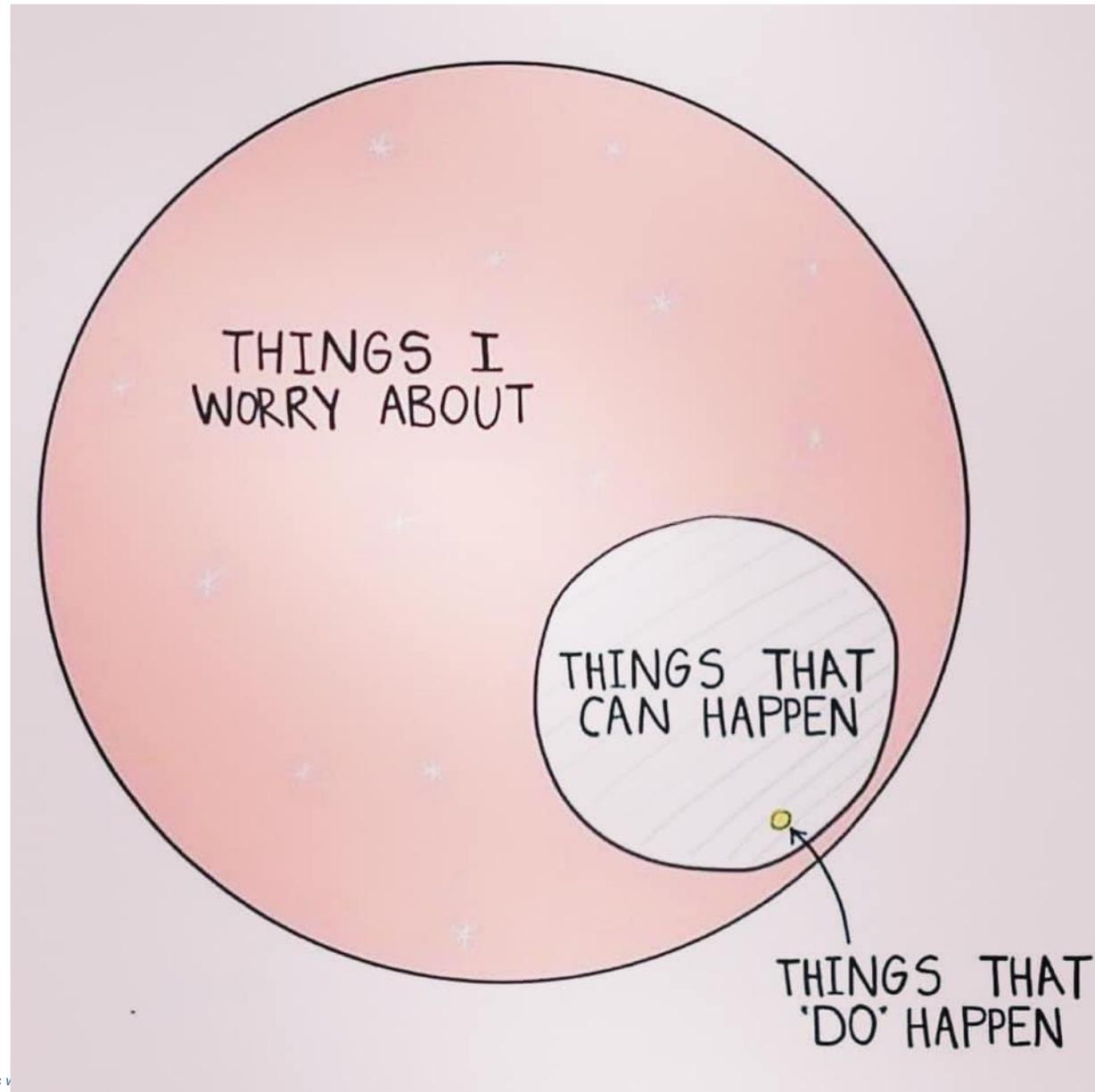
## We Hill Staff

- Meeting with staff has big advantages
- They are institutional memory, make recommendations to the boss
- Who you might see:
  - Chief of Staff
  - Legislative Director (“LD”)
  - Health Legislative Assistant (“Health LA”)
  - Legislative Correspondent (“LC”)
- **REMEMBER: staff juggle many issues; health is just one**

# What's the Worst that Could Happen?

- They ask a question you can't answer.
- They say no.

***Don't Panic!***



# After the Meeting: Your Job's Not Done Yet!

## In the coming days:

- ALWAYS send a thank you email
- Provide any requested follow-up, restate “ask”
- Offer to be a resource in the district

## In the future:

- Stay in touch
- Attend district events
- Find opportunities to engage legislator

# Things your Mother Might Tell You (Rules for Successful Advocacy)

- Always be polite/professional
- Never fudge the truth/don't make stuff up
- Don't talk about politics or money
- Be yourself
- SMILE!
- Say thank you

“Our professional organizations are the voice, but we are the megaphone.”

- Stephane VanderMeulen, MPAS, PA-C



# Go forth and speak for the profession!



Thank you for making this  
commitment to advocacy!

# You Got This: Preparing for Capitol Hill Visits

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