

DEVELOP YOUR LEGISLATIVE ADVOCACY STRATEGY

Once you have determined your advocacy goals, you can focus on developing the most effective strategy to achieve those goals. Focus on these elements of a good advocacy strategy:

- **Identify Decision-Makers**
  Who are the people and institutions you need to influence? Who has the formal authority to make decisions on your policy issue? Is your issue governed primarily by the state—and thus is the state legislature your primary target for lobbying efforts? Who in that body has the power to give you what you want—or prevent you from getting what you want?

- **Be Aware of Your Opponents**
  In addition to focusing on what you want to accomplish and who can give it to you, also be aware of your opponents’ goals and activities. CLPI Senior Training Consultant Marcia Avner suggests remembering the various messages that intersect in an advocacy campaign:

  - **Articulate Messages...**
    To reach these different decision-makers, you will need persuasive messages. Start with one core message and then tailor it to different audiences based on what they are ready to hear, their relationship to you or prior knowledge of your cause, and their self-interest.

  - **And Engage Messengers**
    A good message will be useless unless delivered by the right messenger. Once you determine who you want to reach with your message, identify credible sources who can deliver that message to them. Remember to tap your nonprofit’s relationships—constituent voices add authenticity to any advocacy campaign and personalize your efforts, while coalition, academic, or government partners can lend statistics and other research to support your cause.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>About Us</th>
<th>About Our Opponents</th>
<th>About the Issue</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>What We Say</strong></td>
<td>What we say about ourselves</td>
<td>What we say about our opponents</td>
<td>What we say about the issue</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>What Our Opponents Say</strong></td>
<td>What our opponents say about us</td>
<td>What our opponents say about themselves</td>
<td>What our opponents say about the issue</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>