



Amy Showalter November 18th, 2013

“How You Doin’?” – Making the Most of Your Year-End Evaluation



2013 is in its twilight, so now is a good time to evaluate your overall government relations and professional progress. While you should have specific lobbying, grassroots and PAC metrics that coincide with your strategy, here are some questions to ask yourself and your team. Some of the questions apply to both team and personal pursuits, so you will see them in both categories.

I'd love to learn of your year-end evaluation metrics and benchmarks, so please share in the comments section.

Metrics Minders

First, here are some examples of poor metrics and improved metrics. The bottom line is quantifiable improvement.

For example, “Our team will make better presentations to our Board of Directors / C- level executives.” Better: “We do not read our slides or notes to our audience and we are able to give concise answers to spontaneous questions.” Even better: “After our presentations, we routinely secure at least three new PAC contributors at the legal maximum.” Or, “After our presentations, we gain access to two new chapters / two new departments for grassroots or PAC recruitment.”

Another popular social media metric is: “We have increased our Twitter followers by 20 million.” Better: “We have the top 20 influential bloggers on our issue following us and retweeting our tweets at least once a week.”

You get the idea. The “better” statements above are evidentiary. You can recognize them if you trip over them.

Team Evaluation Questions

Are you, through grassroots and direct lobbying, converting legislators to your side, or just shoring up the faithful? What new approaches or research will accelerate your influence?

Is your team receiving the trenchant feedback you need, whether you “want” it or not? If so, how can you exploit it? If not, how can you acquire it?

Have you made progress against your legislative competition? While you may not have converted them, have you neutralized or demoralized them? How do you know?

Has there been an increase or decrease in outside variables that affect your progress above? If so, how can you mitigate their influence in 2014?

Personal Evaluation Questions

What were your finest accomplishments over the past year? Why were you so successful? What can you replicate for next year?

What were you unable to accomplish due to your own shortcomings? Was it due to lack of discipline, poor planning, poor implementation, or other variables beyond your control? What do you need to do to improve?

Are you receiving the critical, candid inputs you need, whether you "want" them or not? If so, how can you exploit them? If not, how can you acquire them?

Resolve to Improve

Resolve is required for any progress. As I tell my audiences, "You won't win more issues, persuade more legislators or raise more PAC funds by doing things 'reasonably well most of the time.' You can't dabble in excellence." Asking (and answering) the hard questions are a good start to achieving your 2014 legislative priorities.

Amy Showalter is a national authority on grassroots and PAC effectiveness. She is the author of "The Underdog Edge" (Morgan James) www.underdogedge.com ([/web/20141125183511/http://www.underdogedge.com/](http://web/20141125183511/http://www.underdogedge.com/)) and "The Art and Science of the BFF: 105 Ways to Build Relationships on The Hill, at the State House, and in City Hall."

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