

# Media Tip Visiting an Editorial Board

An editorial board meeting is an informal discussion with the newspaper's opinion page editor or editorial board. Visits are usually face-to-face, but can be accomplished over the phone if schedules are tight.

Scheduling a meeting is a great way to build a relationship with these busy folks.



## Who Should Attend?

Limit the number of people attending to no more than three, although one is perfectly fine. Suggested participants include a coalition coordinator, health care representative, business owner, community leader or a state partner.

## Come With a Plan

What is the primary purpose for the visit? Is it to educate the editor on a specific issue? Or is it to persuade him or her to write a favorable editorial or neutralize the paper on a contentious issue?

## Listen Carefully

Let the editor speak, he or she will undoubtedly have many questions to ask. Listen carefully to what the editor is saying...and asking. This serves two purposes: it builds rapport with the editor and it gives a glimpse of the editor's views.

## Know What You're Going to Say

Be prepared to discuss your issue knowledgeably and concisely - do not wing it! Editors are busy people who write a column EVERY day. They have minimal availability for editorial meetings, so plan what you want to say and limit your discussion to one topic. If the editor asks specific questions on another topic, then it's certainly appropriate to respond accordingly.

## Leave Behind Fact Sheets

Editors write columns on every issue known to mankind. They're not experts, but they're certainly required to write knowledgeable opinions. Leave-behinds are a great way to help them understand issues, share facts and serve as a credible resource in the future.

## End With an Ask

Is a favorable editorial the goal? Would the paper consider publishing a guest column on a specific topic? Don't be afraid - end the meeting with a specific request.