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Public Affairs
Council

Launching a Grassroots Program

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10 Steps to Launch a Grassroots Program

LAUNCHING A GRASSROOTS
PROGRAM



#1: Assess the Landscape

- Internal
 - Staff resources
 - Other departments – Communications, Data/IT, Membership/HR
 - Get buy-in from C-suite/board early to establish long-term support
- External
 - Competitors, opponents and allies
 - Establish baselines and benchmarks

#2: Define Success

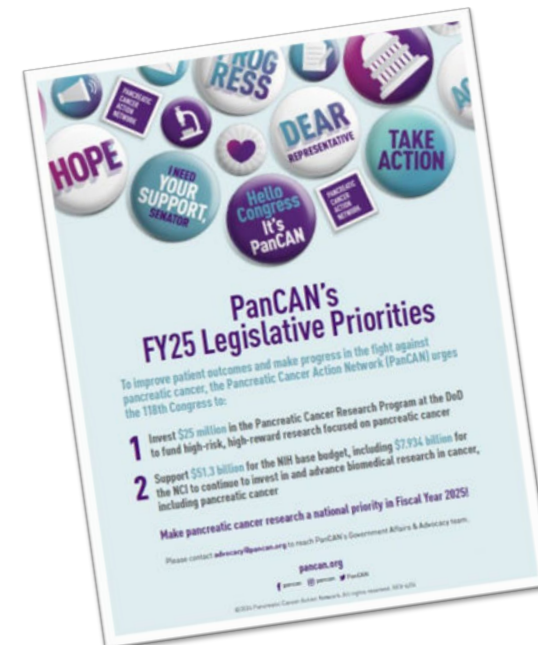
- Internal
 - Bottom line to the business or industry
 - Employee/member involvement and understanding
- External
 - Advancement of key legislative issues
 - Reputation and influence
- Advocacy success can be ambiguous. Defining success up front gains support

#3: Create a Data Management Plan

- Self-managed or external vendor?
- What will you track and how will you collect it?
- The data you compile should help drive your strategy in the future

#4: Build a Communications Strategy

- Create an identity
 - Logos, taglines, brand
- How will you communicate with your advocates, stakeholders and/or the general public?
 - Website – internal and external
 - Role of social media – monitoring vs. active engagement
 - Newsletters, emails, etc.



#5: Recruit Your Advocates

- Broad or narrow strategy?
 - Quantity vs. quality
 - Will you have a separate key contact/ambassador program?
- Start with self-identifiers
- Build a “likely advocate” profile

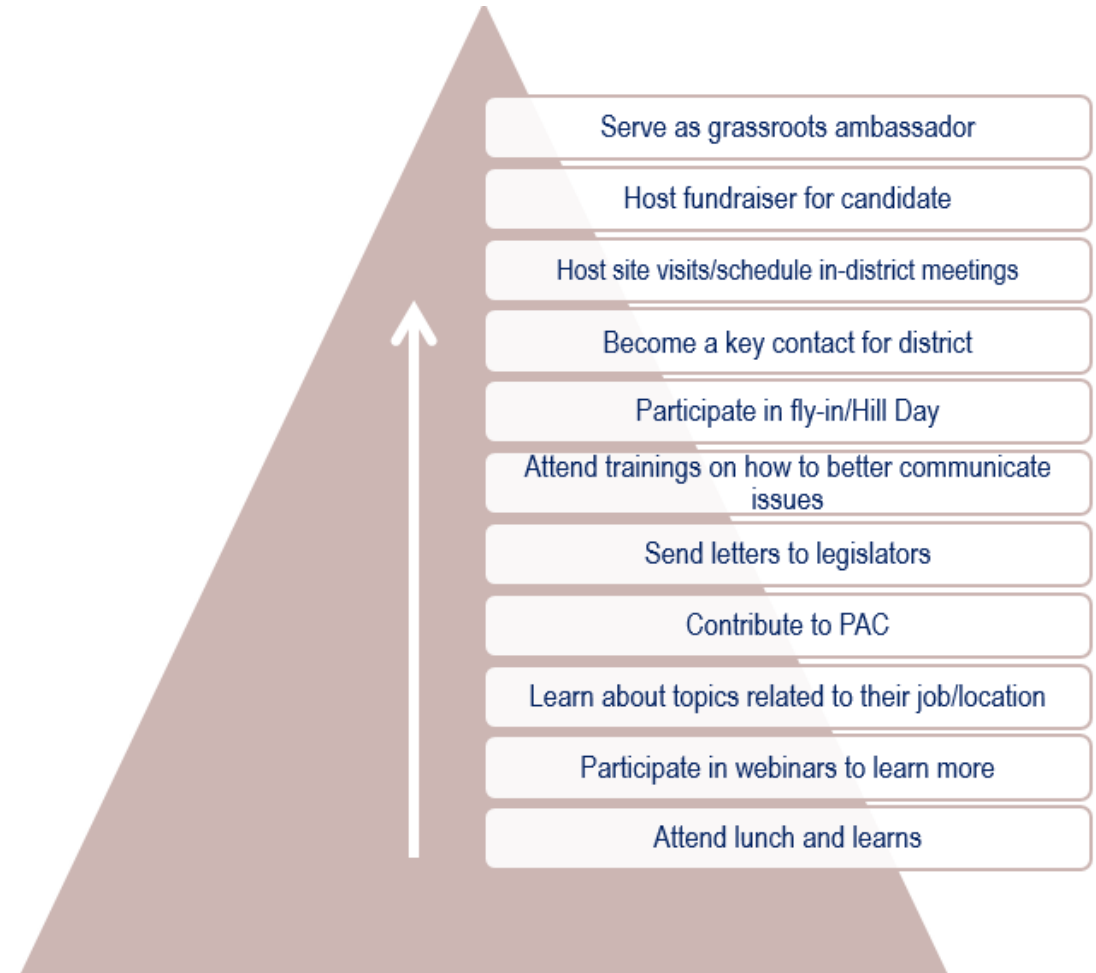
Program Structure

Ladder of Engagement



“the idea that people are likely to become supporters of your organization by taking easy actions, but can be consciously led to take harder and harder actions.”

Netroot Foundation



#6: Educate Your Advocates

- Educate about the issues before you activate
- Use multiple platforms
 - Live training (in-person or virtual)
 - Pre-recorded videos
 - Guides/toolkits
 - Website, blog posts, and social media
- Communicate about civic engagement and voting aside from key issues

#7: Develop an Activation Strategy

- Align with government affairs team on issues, timing, and targets
- Use multiple channels:
 - Email
 - Text/SMS
 - Social media
- Variety is the spice of life – change up the CTA
 - Email/call legislators
 - Sign a petition
 - Share your story

#8: Develop Key Messengers and Messages

- Quantity vs. quality
- Stories vs. data
 - Tell stories to have the greatest impact
 - Get local
 - Get personal

#9: Be Transparent

- Be upfront with advocates about your goals and tactics
- Report back on outcomes – don't just communicate when you are asking for something!
- Build trust and credibility

#10: Measure Outcomes

- Be aware of measuring outputs vs. outcomes
- Determine level of success and ROI while setting new goals



Identifying the Right Metrics

Measurable	Can it be quantified? If it's a qualitative evaluation (i.e. strength of relationship), can you give it a score/rating?
Actionable	What are you going to do with this information? Will it provide insight for future decision-making?
Time-bound	What is the timeframe in which you are tracking your progress?
Consistent	Will you be able to compare year over year? Can you use it to identify trends?
Benchmarkable	Do others track this? Can you use it to compare yourself to similar organizations?
Aligned with Stakeholder Interests	Can you demonstrate the value of your program to both internal and external stakeholders?

What to Track

Engagement Levels

- Number of active participants
 - How do you define active?
- Frequency of participation
- Resource utilization

Advocacy Actions

- Number of actions taken
 - Emails
 - Phone calls
 - Social media posts
 - Regulatory comments
- Coverage of legislative targets
- Fly-ins/lobby days
- Number of in-district meetings, site visits, etc.

Influence and Reach

- Social media impressions/shares
- Open/click/conversion rates
- Relationships with key legislators/stakeholders
- Thought-leadership pieces published

Policy Impact

- Bills introduced/passed
- Bill co-sponsors/signatures on a letter
- Regulatory changes achieved
- Threats averted

How to Track

- CRM system
- Advocacy software
- Surveys and feedback forms
- Excel spreadsheets
- Analytics tools
- Event management tools