

# **Framing and Communicating Our Advocacy Relationship Building**

September 23, 2021

1pm-3pm

# Training Focus:

- Highlight the importance of “self-interest” as a relationship building framework.
- Analyze the role of relationships building with local and statewide political leaders and partners.
- Clarify how this all plays a role in the advancing of older adult programs, services; and, the securing funding and policies.
- Offer tools and skill building.

# What is Advocacy?

Advocacy can take many forms.

- In simple terms, it means making the case for your cause or mission.
- When we talk about advocacy for nonprofits, we usually mean we are making our case in a way that will change public policy to help our cause.
- That means reaching audiences in a position to help make those changes happen.

# Advocacy could be any one of a number of things:

- Research
- Public Education
- Lobbying\* Elected Officials
- Voter Engagement

*These activities are especially important when you want to make sure that underrepresented and vulnerable communities have a voice in decisions that affect them.*

# Why is it important for advancing programs and services for Older Adults?

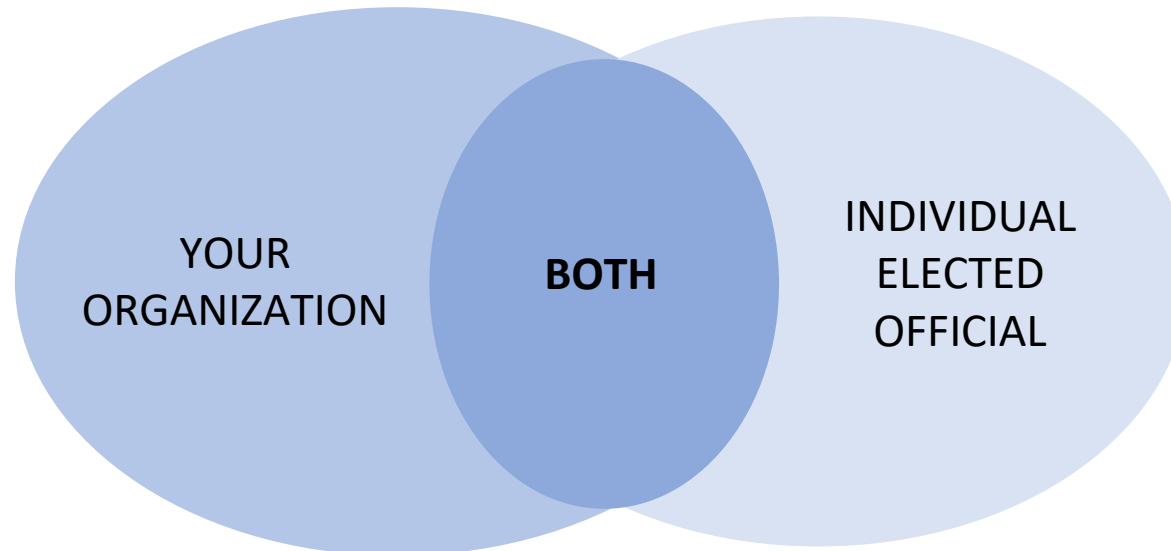
Every nonprofit can and should get involved in advocacy to help advance its mission. Advocacy shapes the public debate about issues that affect nonprofits.

- It's the number one way nonprofits can focus attention on the issues we care about.
- It brings about real change for the people we serve.
- Using the right tools and information, advocacy can work for our organization and the people we serve.
- We are high touch services and we know the people we serve and their experiences—this is our very unique role for advancing our issues.
- By altering systems we are making real change within systems.

# Speaking of Focusing the Attention on Our Missions and Objectives

Our missions and objectives are our organization's "self-interest", and determine our specific goals for advocacy. Our advocacy goal is to align these with our allies, partners and elected official's "self-interest".

Example:



*"Self Interest" = Anything done within organization's values to advance your goals, mission or objectives.*

# Breakout Group Discussion

We don't usually think about our work in this way. So let's give it a try. In your Breakout Groups:

- Discuss and name some of your organization's self-interest.
- Think about what it is your organization needs from other groups or elected officials to fulfill your mission, goals and objectives.
- Be specific.

*For example: One of my organization's self interests is to build relationships with other organizations to increase the number of people we serve. Therefore, increasing our numbers in our grant reports.*

# Breakout Group Discussion Observations



# Examples that may have come up in your groups.

Your organization self-interest may include seeking:

- Opportunities for increasing services/ programs
- Promoting or increasing awareness about your services/programs
- Building relationships with other org or elected officials to leverage services
- Professional development for yourself or staff
- New/advanced leadership roles for staff or board members
- Increased access to government funding opportunities or grants

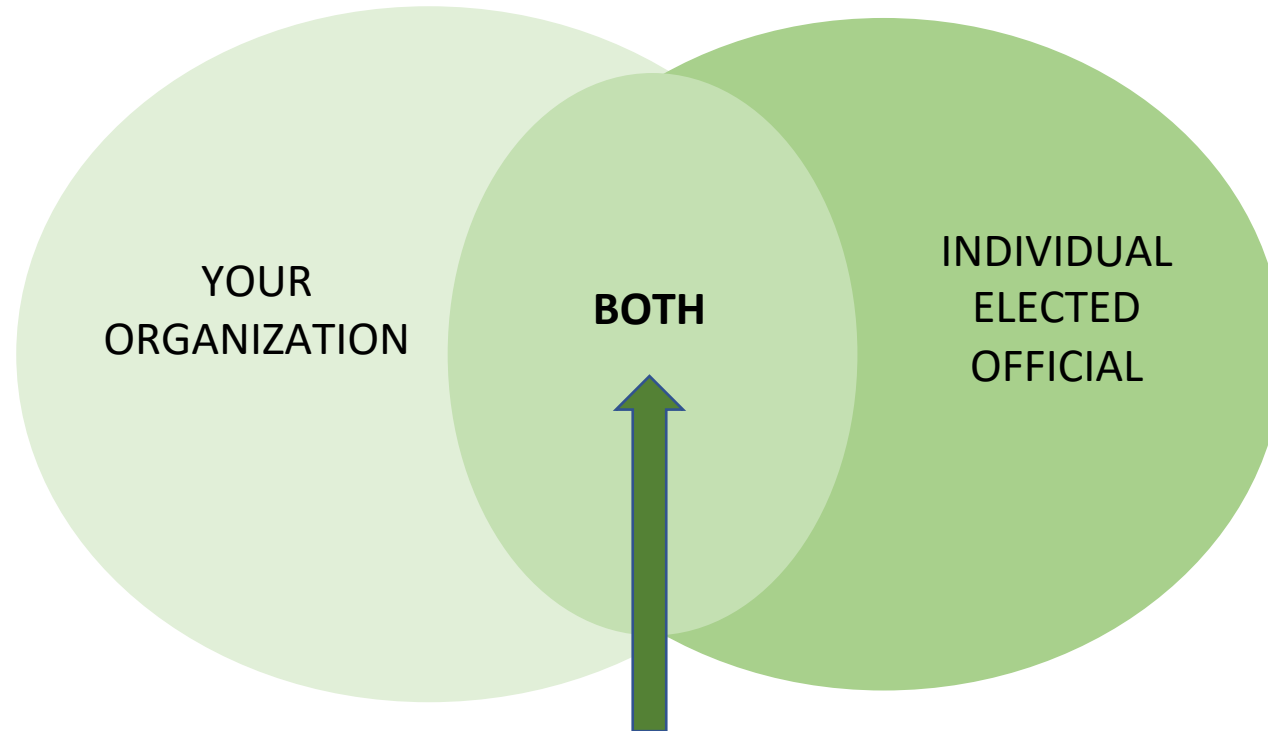
# Larger Group Discussion

- Discuss and name how your organization's meets the self interest of others (including electeds)
- Think about what your organization offers that can fulfill other's mission, goals and objectives.
- Be specific.

## Examples:

- My organization has a strong relationship within the Filipino community. Because of this, we are able to connect other organizations who have leadership within these communities; and, we are able to assure other organizations can provide their unique services to aging Filipinos community members.
- My organization has access to city funding for building a referral network of caretakers. Because of this we can connect groups with caretakers to help them meet the program goals.
- My organization is in City Council Member "X" district. This Council Member is highly interest in food and nutrition. We can provide them with research and data related to Older Adults.

# **“Self-Interest” moves us toward mindful relationship building**



Strategic Relationship Building Sweet Spot

# Two Types of Engagements for Building Relationship Strategies

## Relational Strategies

- Build a connection/bond
- Understand how they interpret experiences
- Understand values
- Find out self-interest
- What motivates them?

## Transactional Strategies

- Get them to meet with you
- Move them into action
- Get them to take action
- Ask them to do a specific task

*Building advocacy relations requires moving through a framework from Relational to Transactional and, back and forth...*

# Let's go Deeper...

What are we learning as we build relational strategies with electeds?

- What they value
- How they use their experience to interpreted what they care about
- What they have the strongest concerns about, or are less concerned about
- What are their values (basic and fundamental beliefs that guide them)
- What will motivates them toward taking real action
- Bottomline: How this relates to issues impacting Older Adults
- Other...?

# Advancing Strategies from Relational to Transaction

- **Be Appropriate:** Match up the person to our ask
- **Be Flexible:** Offer several options for action
- **Be Realistic:** Don't ask them to "sign their life over"
- **Be Transparent:** Acknowledge how much responsibility this ask require
- **Be A Partner:** Are we willing to share responsibility to advance the ask
- **Be Mindful:** Think about their career /leadership development paths
- **Be Prepared:** Do our homework- this shows we are interested in their "self interest"
- **Be Specific:** Use details, numbers and places as much as possible

*Moving to transactional is depended on how strong you've built your relationship....What's your experience...*

# Advocacy is all about Power Analysis

“Power analysis” of an advocacy issue is about the gathering of intelligence that can be used to the tactical advantage of an organization’s mission and goals. Typically this is used by an activist.

We should always look for ways that we can use the intelligence gathered to further our advocacy objectives.

What power analysis shows...

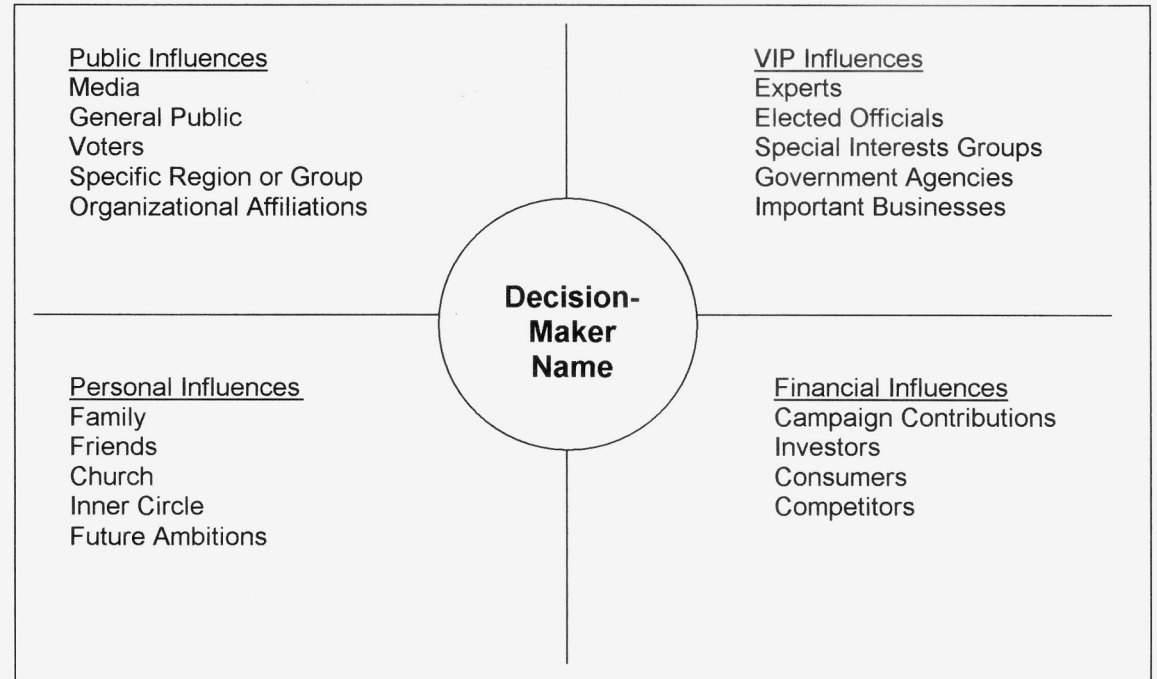
- Being right is not enough
- Sad stories are not enough
- Demands without real “power” are not enough

# Power Mapping

A valuable tool for providing a simple framework and a set of tools to better understand and leverage relationships. This framework is based on the assumption that networks of relationships are critical resources, and that stronger networks yield stronger solutions.

This includes networks between individuals, organizations, institutions, elected officials, etc.

Tool 2: Power Mapping



1. Who has the power to decide? Put them in the center
2. Who are the less powerful players that influence decision maker? Write their names down in the appropriate category
3. Who of these have the most influence? Circle them
4. Who do we have access to? Star them
5. Look over list – whom do we know that has access to and can influence those identified or the decision-maker directly?



# Advocacy Tracking Tool

Every year SSC tracks – and advocates for – legislative proposals that will help us advocate and advance the lives of older adults in alameda county. We use this tool to build our strategic relationship building and communication.

## **We Track:**

- Legislation
- Policies
- Bills
- Funding
- The Elected/Legislator
- Their Position
- Our Relationship
- Their History
- What They Publicly Say

## **We Build a Relational Strategy:**

- Build a connection/bond
- Understand how they interpret experiences
- Understand their values
- Find out their self-interest
- Discover what motivates them

## **We Build a Transitional Strategy:**

- Get them to take action
- Move them into action
- Get them to meet with you
- Ask them to do a specific task

*Advocacy tracking is specific to the the elected and the action. It moves through the process more like a spreadsheet, rather than a list.*

**Let's look at this Advocacy  
Tracking Tool together.**

**Senior Services Coalition** of Alameda County

## AGING IS SOMETHING WE ALL HAVE IN COMMON

[illegible]

# Workshop Reflections...

- How do we harness this training for our own work?
- How can you use this for your own organization's work?
- Do you have examples of other ways to use it beyond legislators?
- What are some of your thoughts about immediate uses for this training and possible next steps?

# Thank you!

[kweli@seniorservicescoalition.org](mailto:kweli@seniorservicescoalition.org)

*(Note: Slides are available on website.)*