



Communicating Your Story



Ann Charles
Great Plains
Development
Authority



Talking to the Public

Seek out community leaders

- Determine your audience based on the area of impact
- Invite the people who make decisions

Speak to small groups

- Civic clubs
- Senior citizen organizations
- Chambers of Commerce
- Regional groups



Working With the Press

BRAC is complicated

- Reporters need educated
- Milestones need to be pointed out
- Provide graphics that help tell the story
- Write the story yourself, if needed
- Provide photos and cut lines
- Connect the dots
- Play fair with all of them
- Invite television cameras
- Don't make everything a big deal
- Offer to write a column
- Be available when they want information



Get the Word Out Yourself

Newsletters

- Tell them what they want to know
- Keep it simple without inside jargon
- Use pictures
- Make it fun
- Keep it short
- Distribute it electronically
- Put them in break rooms and libraries
- Keep back copies printed
- Include board members' names and affiliations
- Give them contact information
- Ask for suggestions



Website

- Make it attractive
- Make it functional
- Keep it current
- Think of the future when designing



Communicating with Elected Officials

- Politicians can be a partner to help cut through red tape
- Create a lever to move the process along when it gets stymied
- Their assistance can double or triple your staff

However ...

Don't play political parties against each other;
You will eventually lose.



Senate Bill 60

Gov. Mark Parkinson signed a bill ushered through the Kansas Legislature by Senator Dwayne Umbarger, allowing GPDA to sell property without taking bids as required by existing law.

Do You Have a Guru on Your Board?

You have to have a person inside your operation who understands politics.



- The best guru will be someone extremely close to your operation, knowledgeable of the past and anticipating the future.
- Get your guru on the inside of your operation as an advisor. You may not even be aware that he can help.
- Listen when he anticipates needs and suggests involvement.

Keep Your Politicians Informed

BRAC is complicated.

Don't wait until you need help to bring your allies up to date.

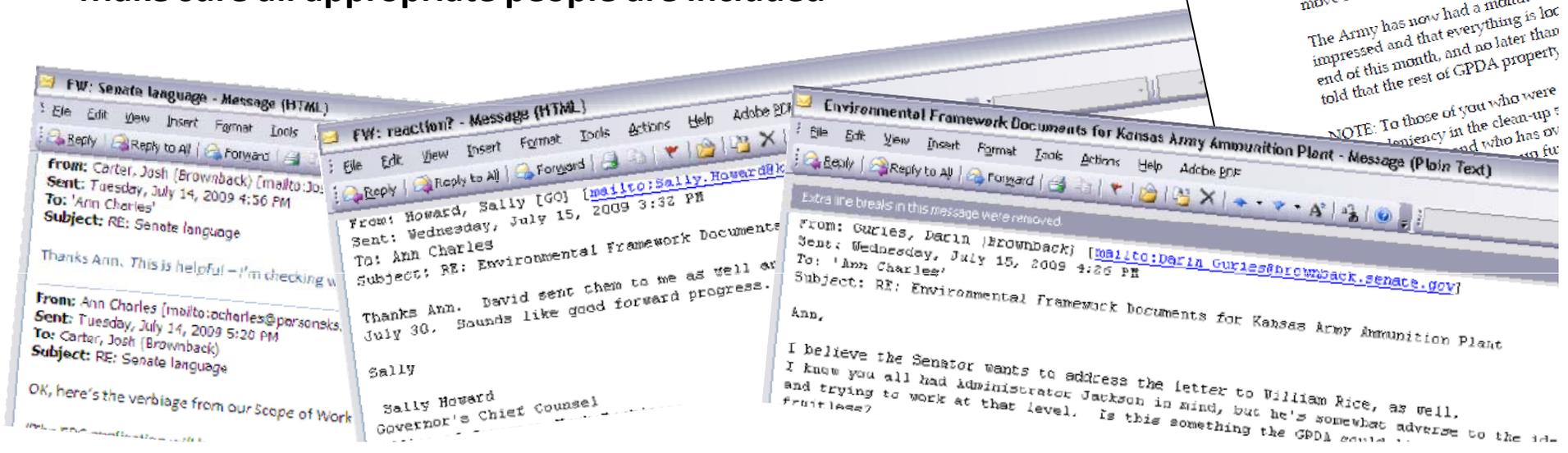


- Meet in their offices when possible
- Attend political coffees and town halls
 - Update them through newsletters
- Create concise Governmental Updates
- Touch base by phone, email, or in person at least monthly
 - Know their appearance schedules
- Ask their scheduler for 10 minutes before or after nearby appointments
 - Give them and their staffs tours
- Always have a printed page to leave behind

Governmental Updates

Make updates concise so they will be read.

- Tell politicians what they NEED to know rather than everything you want to tell them
- Keep it brief – bullets are better and less than a full page is ideal
- Create a group list of who to send to
- E-mail to a live person with a real name, not a generic address
- Be diplomatic in your grumbling if the target is on the “send” list
- Be attentive to how the recipients display in the “To:” column
- Make sure all appropriate people are included



Who to Ask for Help

- Hit the right level to get the right results – local, state, national
- Do you need a smooth talker or a sledge hammer – know the skills of your politicians
- Know what your politicians' ambitions are and assess how they can help themselves by helping you

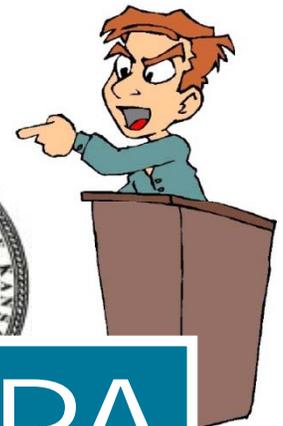


When to Ask for Help

- Ask for help before it's crisis time
- Give politicians a heads-up at the first sign of a problem so they can help guide your actions
- Don't make your politician be a bully by throwing him into an impossible situation
- Don't wait so long that it's already a losing deal and your champ becomes a loser through little fault of his own
- When you ask for help, provide talking points or draft a letter



VS.



Get the Legislation You Need

Are your rebuilding efforts limited because you don't have all the tools you need to make it work?

It's easier to get legislation out of your state officials than it is to get money – just ASK!



- **You have a unique property unlike anything else in your state – play on that for exemptions**
- **You're wounded because you got BRACed – use that**
- **Demand a level playing field with other economic development efforts**

How to Change State Law

- Find out how a bill becomes law in your state
- Talk to your state senator and representative about the problem
- Tell them how you think it can be fixed
- Draft verbiage to help them get started
- Provide solid arguments and examples
- Give them the pros and cons of the proposed action
- Be prepared to testify before committees on a moment's notice
- Arrange for others to testify on your behalf
- Champion your legislator to your press and others
- Even if it's a loss, praise the effort made and ask about starting over during the next session

