Winning Over Decision Makers
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Overview
- Building Influence
- Educating Decision Makers
- Advocacy

Transforming your decision makers into advocates for your library.
It all begins with a trusted relationship with your decision makers.

Get to know your decision makers and build a relationship **BEFORE** you need their help.
Building Influence

“Show up! You want to be at the table rather than on the menu.”

Commissioner Don Larson

- Invite your decision maker to coffee and a tour of your library.
- Show how your library is a valued community resource.
- Attend community events such as legislative coffees.
- Above all else, be honest!

Educating Decision Makers

Takes years to build, seconds to break and forever to repair.
Educating Decision Makers

Make sure your decision makers know of the services your library provides to the community.

Let them know it’s not just card catalogs and books - provide an update on current services.
Educating Decision Makers

Establish how you and your library are indispensable to your community.

Advocacy

Do your homework.
- Know the process.
- Know the players.
- Know the facts.
- Know your position.
- Know and understand your opponent’s position.
Know the facts.

- Research how the, budget request, bill, etc., impacts the community - not just you or your library.
- Watch for false news or social media postings.
- Be prepared to counter with verifiable facts.

Educating the decision makers on your position.

- Share the background and your position.
- Use facts.
- Show how your position improves the community.
- Tie your position to the decision maker’s goals.
- Don’t be afraid to share the opponent’s position and show how your position differs.
- Stop talking before they stop listening.
- Be respectful of the decision maker’s limited time and resources.

South Dakota Legislature

- Relationships
- Introduce yourself
- Have a welcoming personality
- When possible tie your goals to their interests
- Educating Legislators and leave your contact information
- Become a Resource
- Advocacy
- Make sure it’s a battle worth fighting
- Above all else, honesty
- Thank legislators for their service.
A few final thoughts.
aka – we’re almost done.

You must promote your library

“When presenting ideas to decision-makers, realize that it is your responsibility to sell, not their responsibility to buy.”

Marshall Goldsmith

Framing the Issue

Focus on how your idea, budget request, etc., benefits the community - not just your position.
Present a realistic cost-benefit analysis of your idea.

Decision makers are dealing with limited resources, time, and energy. Be respectful of their time and prepared to defend the merits of your proposal.

Conclusion

Thank you for your time. Any questions or comments, please feel free to email or call:

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