

Connecting the Dots: Moving Beyond the Brushstroke to a Policy-informed Masterpiece



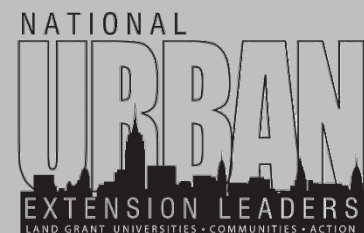
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How are we positioned?

- Urban County Extension Directors
- County Commissioner Board or County Council
- Complex Environments and Political Structures



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What's the issue?

- Legislators are busy individuals
- Multiple meetings and asks cross their desks daily
- Legislators are often engaged in community, which also brings forward multiple agendas, ideas, requests, and the list goes on...

It is our job to cut through the clutter, connect the dots, and provide a positive and meaningful experience.



Setting Agendas... It's All In the Preparation

- **Know the playground politics... and sandbox dynamics...**
 - Know the players, supporters, and naysayers
 - Become an avid reader of local news outlets
 - Utilize Technology (Google Alerts)
 - Know what types of organizations / initiatives have been supported in the past
 - Throughout the fact-finding process, remain professional



Next step... Take a look at your organization

- **360 Evaluation**

- Who are your supporters / naysayers?
- Who does similar work?
- Who is in your blind spot aspiring to infiltrate your space?
- Who has an idea, but no strategy or capacity?



Prepare to refrain from the YES! syndrome



- Prepare beforehand how you desire to position yourself... know your objectives and value proposition
- Before saying yes, be certain that you can deliver
- Assess your personal and/or team capacity and willingness
- If you do say yes, deliver early and deliver correctly

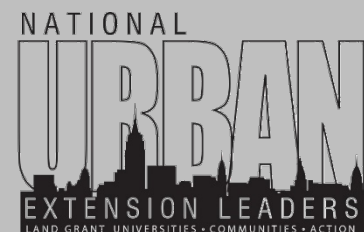


The Power of Position

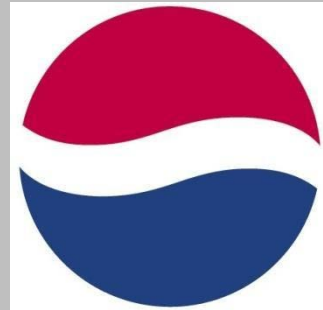
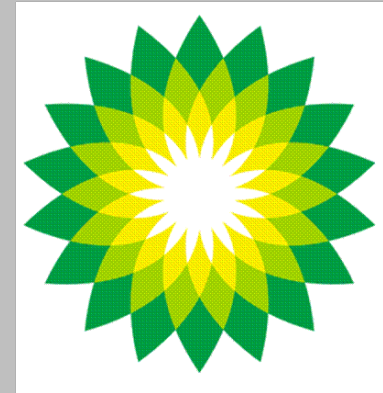


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The Power of Position



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Let's think strategically...

- Position yourself to capitalize on timely decisions and/or funding opportunities
 - Examples: Water Quality, Infant Mortality
- Once your position has become established, think like a marketer... remind and follow up



If Appropriate, Consider Partners

Remember, it's not always about who you know... it's also about who knows you AND what they are willing to communicate about you.

- Build a team around your request
- Who's on the "Who's Who" whom you are connected to?
- What connections do those who are "Team Extension" have with your target audience?
- What did your preparation tell you about other possible linkages?



Another Extension of Extension...

Your Advisory Committee



- Ready-made advocates... once in place, be sure they drink the kool-aid! 😊
- Think beyond today... Where do you desire your organization and community to be in 5, 10, 20 years?
- If you have a committee in place, identify the gaps (e.g. Media, Banking, Medical)
- Equip them well to sing like a hummingbird about your organization



In Summary...



- Success is where preparation and opportunity meet
- Understand the playground politics
- Connect the dots to position yourself and your organization
- Prep your supporters to *HUMM* and connect the dots on your behalf



Lets Talk...

What are examples in your work where you have connected the dots to enhance community?



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