

How to Rock the Boat *Without Going Overboard*

The Nine Question Path to Effective Advocacy



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“Bureaucracy defends the status quo long past the time when the quo has lost its status”

Laurence J. Peter



What is Advocacy?

Speaking and **acting** for change
or justice on behalf of



oneself or
another
person or
a cause.



Discussion time

Have you ever?

Asked for a refund?

Negotiated with a utility company?

Written/submitted a complaint letter?

Gone to a rally or protest?

Disagreed with a doctor or a case manager?

Something **else**?

All of these examples have things in common:

- Active process – **rocks do not advocate**
– *it **requires action**.*
- There will be an **outcome**
– *whether you notice it or agree with it.*
- You are trying to **get something**
– *for you or someone else.*

Four Principle Types of Advocacy:





Self-Advocacy

Representing **your own** rights and interests and seeking solutions to problems on your own.



Example – Explaining what it means to “hold” a reservation

Individual Advocacy

Speaking or acting **on behalf of** an individual to...



... achieve change,
protect legal or social rights, or
to effect justice **for someone**.

Example-accompanying a friend to the Housing Authority

Systems or Group Advocacy

Influencing social and political systems to bring about changes for **groups of people**



Example
The George Floyd protests

Legal or Representative Advocacy

Litigating and
legislating to
benefit

individuals or

classes of people.



The Americans with Disabilities Act

Signing Ceremony

July 26, 1990.

Example

Signing of the ADA

Summary



No matter what type of advocacy you wind up doing, **well-practiced advocacy skills** will increase your chances of getting what you want, when you want it. Those skills can help you identify, resolve and eventually prevent problems.

Three Essentials to Advocacy

Information
A

Information
C

U
INFORMATION

A
T
E



9

questions

**to help
guide you:**

1

What do we want?

Stay focused on the prize.

If you do not know what you want, how
are you going to get it?

Who can give it to us?

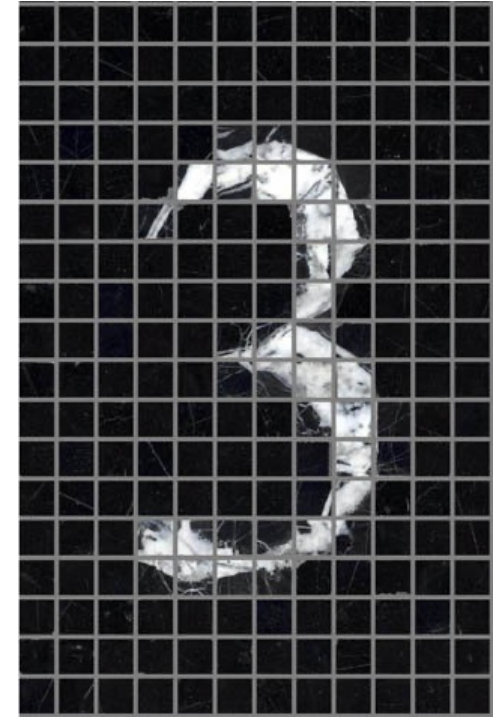
Who is responsible?

Who has authority?

2



Why should they care?



What do they need to hear?

Who do they need to hear it
from?

From **whom** do they need to
hear?

The person?

A doctor?

You?

Their boss?



How do we get them to hear it?

Phone call

Letter

Email

Personal visit

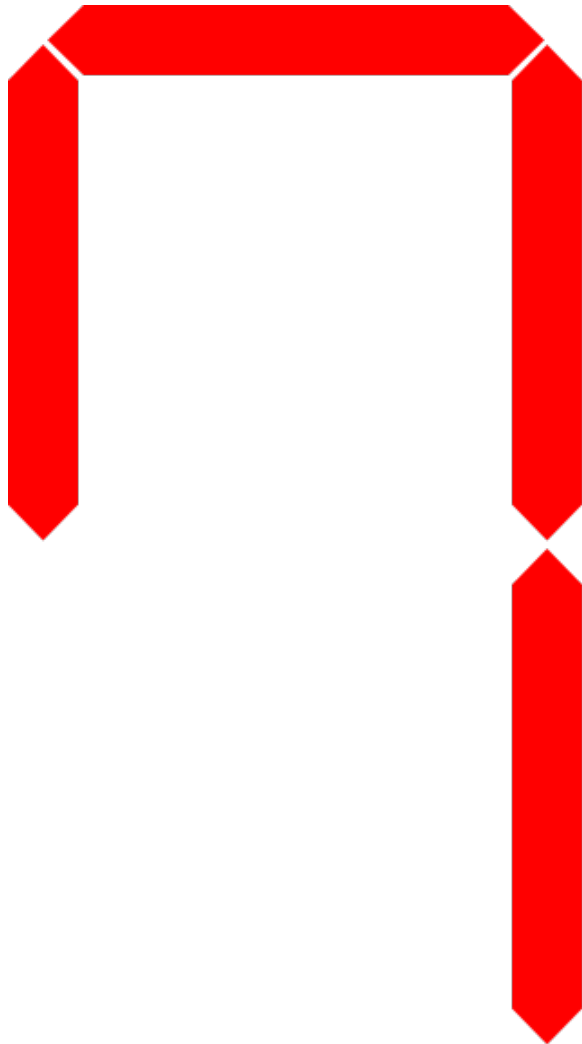
Sky **w**riting



**Documents? Knowledge? Political
capital? Connections?**

What do we have?





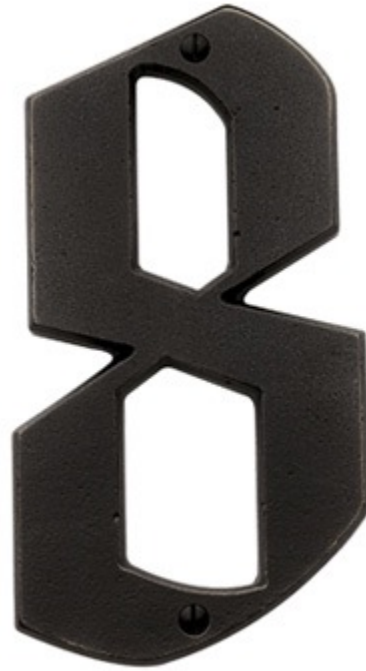
What do we need?

Documents?

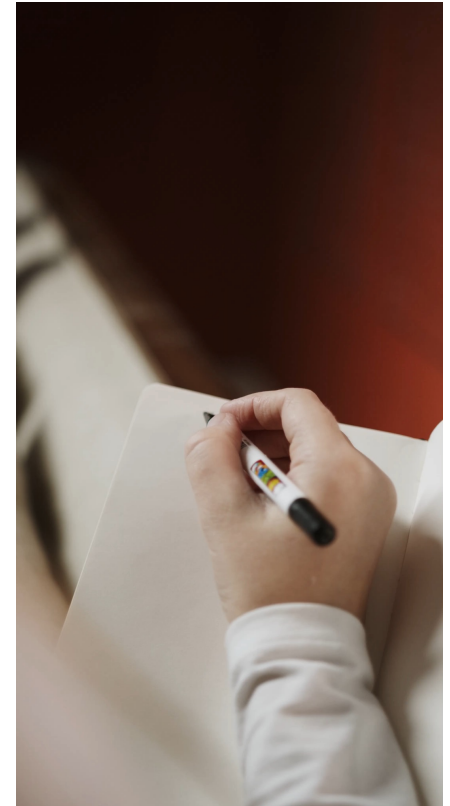
An expert?

Statistics?

**How
do we
begin?**



Who does what?



First
steps?

Deliverables?

How will **we** know if it is working?



Timelines?

Existing procedural guidelines?

Gut feelings?





Three Ps of Effective Advocacy

Politeness

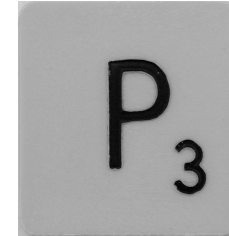


Patience



Persistence

Politeness



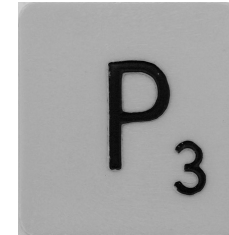
Understanding your target

Helpful approach

Respect the forum

“People can only hear you when they are moving toward you, and they are not likely to when your words are pursuing them.”

Patience



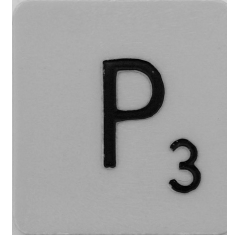
Change is usually slow

Pick your battle(s)

Legitimate constraints

*“Patience is not passive; on the contrary it is active;
it is concentrated strength.”*

Persistence



Do not give up

Continue developing relationships

Use alternative approaches or avenues

“Paralyze resistance with persistence.”



Do Not

***Lie* – might cost you your credibility
& strategic relationships**

***Complain* – must propose solutions**

***Speak just* – the loudest voice often
to speak loses relevance**

***Send the wrong messenger* – must connect with
who you are trying
to influence**



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