



Making Your Case E-learning Course

Course Outline

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"Making Your Case" is a three-hour self-directed course that teaches participants to communicate effectively with public officials by telling their personal stories, writing effective letters, providing legislative testimony and communicating in positive ways.

GETTING READY

What You'll Learn

Outlines the key concepts covered in the "Getting Started" module.

What's Your Story?

Participants identify a personal situation or "story" that they will develop and use throughout the course.

Exercise: Documenting Your Story

Opportunity for participants to identify key facts and important supporting information to help develop their personal story.

What's Your Issue?

Discusses the importance of selecting a particular issue that you want changed.

Exercise: Pick an Issue

Opportunity for participants to "classify" their issues in one of four general categories: Live, Learn, Work and Participate.

What's Your Request for Action?

Helps participants to identify the specific action or actions that they are seeking.

Exercise: Writing Your Request

Opportunity to write a specific request that addresses the most common questions asked by elected officials.

Pulling It All Together

Reviews the key concepts learned in the "Getting Ready" module.

Test Your Understanding #1

Certification exam #1 for the *Making Your Case* e-learning course.

GETTING YOUR MESSAGE ACROSS

What You'll Learn

Outlines the key concepts covered in the "Getting Your Message Across" module.

Making Your Case E-learning Course: Course Outline

Writing Great Letters and E-Mails

Overview of effective written communications used to present issues to elected officials.

Why Put It In Writing?

Reviews the important role written communications play in making your case with elected officials.

Six Critical Elements

Identifies the key elements of an effective letter or e-mail.

Exercise: How can this letter be improved?

Interactive opportunity to make a letter even more effective.

Assignment: Write a Letter

Opportunity to draft a letter to a legislator using your personal story and supporting facts.

Meeting with Public Officials

Discusses the importance of face-to-face contact and offers techniques for arranging and handling personal meetings.

Developing Personal Rapport

Discusses how a personal meeting achieves different results than a letter or e-mail.

Step 1: Getting the Appointment

Strategies for arranging an appointment with an elected official.

Exercise: What Did Maria Do Right?

Interactive opportunity to evaluate the effectiveness of a telephone contact with an elected official.

Step 2: Do Your Homework

Discusses the importance of gathering information about the elected official, his or her constituency and past votes on issues related to people with developmental disabilities.

Step 3: Practice, Practice!

Reinforces the importance of becoming comfortable with your “case” before meeting with an elected official.

Step 4: Put It In Writing

Reviews the importance of putting your “case” in writing and leaving it with an elected official after the meeting.

Step 5: The Meeting

Outlines common elements of and strategies for conducting an effective meeting with an elected official.

Step 6: Follow-Up

Describes the importance of following up with an elected official after the meeting.

Giving Testimony

Introduces the concept of testifying before a legislative committee.

Making Your Case E-learning Course: Course Outline

Using Legislative Forums

Presents an overview of legislative testimony and techniques for presenting your case effectively.

Advance Preparation

Helps participants prepare to testify before a legislative committee.

Getting on the Agenda

Strategies for getting your issue included on the agenda of a committee hearing.

Exercise: Giving Tremendous Testimony

Interactive opportunity to respond to typical questions legislators ask, regardless of the issue being discussed.

Assignment: How Would You Respond?

Opportunity for participants to think through their responses to common legislator reactions in light of the personal issues each has chosen.

Pulling It All Together

Highlights key concepts learned in the "Getting Your Message Across" module.

Test Your Understanding #2

Certification exam #2 for the *Making Your Case* e-learning course.

KEEPING IT GOING

What You'll Learn

Overview of key community organizing concepts to be covered in the "Keeping It Going" module.

Building Ongoing Relationships

Explains the importance of building ongoing relationships with legislators and describes the key characteristics of a good relationship.

Community Organizing

Outlines the basic elements of community organizing and the role it plays in creating systemic change.

Why Organize?

Explains community organization and its potential.

Making It Work

Outlines the key components of an effective plan for organizing others.

Where to Begin

Presents a planning process that community organizers can use.

Common Tactics

Identifies common tactics organizers use to generate attention and support for an issue.

Making Your Case E-learning Course: Course Outline

Tactic #1: Building A Coalition

Defines a coalition and identifies the characteristics of an effective coalition.

Tactic #2: Media

Explains how organizers can use the media to get their message across to a broader audience.

Tactic #3: Rallies and Demonstrations

Explains the role rallies and demonstrations play in an overall community effort.

Tactic #4: Petitions

Reviews five primary uses of a petition campaign.

Tactic #5: Letter Writing Campaigns

Discusses letter writing campaigns.

Tactic #6: Public Hearings

Explains public hearings and suggestions for maximizing them.

Get Political!

Discusses the importance of political involvement.

Get Involved!

Identifies some ways individuals can become involved in the political process.

Get Out and Vote

Offers information related to voting and voters.

Campaign Involvement

Discusses opportunities to become involved in the campaigns of an individual who supports your views on an issue.

Assignment: Get Out and Vote

Encourages participants to exercise their right to vote.

Pulling It All Together

Highlights the key concepts learned in the "Keeping It Going" module.

Test Your Understanding #3

Certification exam #3 for the *Making Your Case* e-learning course.

KNOWING THE SYSTEM

What You'll Learn

Overview of key public policy concepts covered in the "Knowing the System" module.

How Public Policy is Made

Defines "public policy" and offers general information on how public policy is made at various levels of government.

Making Your Case E-learning Course: Course Outline

Know the Players

Guides participants to identify key elected officials in their areas.

Assignment: How You Can Learn More

Offers four opportunities for participants to expand their understanding of the legislative system and how it works.

Pulling It All Together

Highlights key concepts learned in the "Knowing the System" module.

CONCLUSION

The Future Awaits

Encourages participants to become advocates and to apply their new skills to help change “the system.”

Last Gentle Reminders

Techniques for successful advocacy.