

Worksheet: Pathways of Influence

“If you would persuade, you must appeal to interest rather than intellect.” ~Benjamin Franklin

Think back to the Three Key Questions. Knowing which individual lawmakers, specifically, have the power to give you what you want is critical. Once you figure that out, it is time to learn as much about that person as you can from public sources and conversations with people who might know them personally or professionally.

Your research will uncover valuable “pathways of influence” to this lawmaker and will dramatically improve your ability to appeal to them based on their own motivated self-interest. Sometimes this is called “target research.”

Use this worksheet to get you started. Once you have done some research, share your findings with others in your coalition and invite them to cross-reference the data with their own volunteers, staff, and members to see if they can uncover any relevant relationships. For example, your research might uncover that the lawmaker’s children attend a particular elementary school, their spouse is a pediatrician, there’s a Boys & Girls Club in their district and they are on the board of the state conference of the NAACP. All of those facts may become pathways of influence if you look for connections – and then follow through on them! If you’d like to learn even more about this technique, check out [Pathways of Influence: Steps to turn a little bit of knowledge into a whole lotta power](#).

HELPFUL HINT- Here are several general resources you can use to find pathways of influence:

- Google search and Google news search
- State legislative websites
- Campaign websites
- Press releases (from their legislative web page or campaign website)
- Social media accounts

Your name:

Date:

Which lawmaker are you researching?

What office do they hold?

How long has the lawmaker been in the legislature?

What committee assignments do they have?

What is their party affiliation?

Is this legislator in the majority party in your state?

Majority in State Senate Majority in House of Representatives/Assembly Same party as Governor

How long has the person been in the legislature?

What community do they live in?

What is a brief description of the community? ([Wikipedia](#) usually has a blurb on every city and town that you can reach from the search function.)

Population size:

Location within state, if noted:

Colleges/universities in the community:

Do they ever hold office hours in the district to meet with constituents? If so, when are those office hours?

What does/did the lawmaker do, professionally, besides serving in the legislature?

What information did you find about their family members?

Does the lawmaker have any hobbies, volunteer activities, or pet issues that you could find?

What community organizations seem to be important to them and why?

Which organizations have given an award to the lawmaker?

If they participate in organized religion, what is the name of the place they worship?

Look them up on Facebook. What does their profile tell you? Do you have any "Friends" in common? If they post, what are they generally posting about?

Do they use any of these social media platforms?

Facebook

Twitter

LinkedIn

Instagram

If so, what do you learn about them from looking at what they have posted?

Google their name + key terms related to the campaign and see if you learn anything interesting. For example, Google legislator’s name along with terms like those listed below and see if you get any hits. These hits might give you some insight into common ground you might have with this lawmaker.

Eating disorders	Advertising
Body confidence	Marketing
Body positivity	Photoshop
Anorexia or bulimia	Weight discrimination
Obesity	Hair or skin tone discrimination
Weight loss supplements	Mental health
Diet pills	Women’s or child health
Youth sports	Muscle-building supplement
Youth leadership	Teen substance abuse
Kidney or liver disease	Anabolic steroid use

Based on everything you have learned through your research, what do you think might persuade this lawmaker to support your legislation?