



Preparing and Delivering Congressional Testimony

Learn how to prepare written testimony and to effectively testify before Congress.

Your staff can gain a better understanding of the role and purpose of congressional committees and the hearing process in the work of Congress with this course. Our experienced instructors review types of committees and hearings. They focus on all aspects of testimony preparation including research, the process of persuasion, and specifics of how to effectively structure written and oral testimony.

Sample One-Day Agenda

9:00 Welcome and Introduction

9:05 Committee Action and the Hearing Environment

- The role of committees and the hearing process in Congress
- Types and membership of committees; types of committee hearings (informational, legislative, investigative, oversight, public relations)
- Committee markup of legislation and committee reports
- The role of the committee chairmen and staff in deciding the hearing subject matter, selecting witnesses and preparing questions

10:00 Congressional Hearings: A Staff Perspective

- The work and organization of the relevant committees
- How these committees prepare for hearings
- What staff and members expect from witnesses
- Differences between authorization and appropriation hearings
- The nature of the relationship between the committees and executive agencies
- What the staffers and members of Congress believe makes effective testimony
- Suggestions for preparing for congressional hearings.

11:00 – Break

11:15 Testimony Preparation

- Testimony preparation, including research
- The process of persuasion and the nature of argument

Interactive group exercises which demonstrate sound arguments

12:15 Lunch

1:15 Testimony Delivery

- Review a "testimony worksheet"
- Review of effective delivery techniques
- Discuss witness/member dynamics and the "art" of responding to questions.

2:30 Break

2:45 Videotape: Examples of Effective and Non-effective Testimony and Question-and-Answer Techniques

- View videotapes of actual congressional hearings
- Critique the witnesses' formal presentations/reading of testimony as well as their responses/reactions during the question-and-answer session.

4:00 Complete Evaluations/Program Concludes

Participants will learn effective delivery and listening techniques, and how to deal with Q&A and difficult situations. Videotapes of actual congressional hearings and testimony will be viewed, demonstrating both effective and ineffective testimony by witnesses.

"A great session for Congressional Affairs personnel who write testimony. I now feel confident that I could effectively write solid testimony." *Congressional and Public Affairs Specialist, Dept. of Justice*

"Would encourage people to do this earlier in their career when they start writing testimony. All sessions very useful!"

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Sample Agendas: See how others have used our training. Selected sample agendas from actual programs designed for previous clients are on our web site at www.SampleAgendas.com

When: The complete course requires one to three days, although selected topics can be combined with other program topics for a shorter or longer program. One-on-one feedback and coaching can also be incorporated.

Course Fee: Inside the Washington, DC metropolitan area, when the course is offered on the client's site with lunch provided by the client, the one-day course is cost-effective with as few as fifteen attendees.

Customization provides confidentiality and allows agency-specific issues to be addressed by the faculty.

Questions: For more information and to get a custom program quote and date availability, call 202-678-1600.

