

# PROGRAM AGENDA

*TheCapitol.Net's Executive Conference:*  
**Strategies for Working With Congress and Its Staff:  
Communicating Effectively with Capitol Hill**

**2007**  
Washington, DC

## **9:00 Welcome and Introduction**

### **Tools and Techniques for Communicating Effectively with Capitol Hill**

This session will set the context by defining the political environment in the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress, and the congressional members and staff who work there. It will then discuss specific tools and techniques that you can use to communicate most effectively with them, specifically addressing how you need to adjust your communication at the end of one Congress, and the beginning of another. The instructor will provide practical suggestions for making the most of meetings with staff, including how to set-up a meeting, who should attend, and how to follow-up after the meeting. The session will provide important "do's" and "don'ts" of interacting with the Hill and building a good working relationship between Congress and outside interests.

## **10:30 Break**

## **10:40 How to Write a One Pager/Backgrounder and Make Your Website Hill Friendly**

You may have had a great meeting with the member of Congress and his/her staff, but if you didn't leave behind a one page summary of your issue, you lost the opportunity to have your issue remain on their radar screen. During this session you will learn how to prepare, structure, and write an effective "one-pager". Learn what should or shouldn't be included. The instructor will also discuss how you can use your website as a tool to reach and teach Members of Congress and their staffs.

## **11:10 Break**

## **11:20 Making Your Voice Heard on Capitol Hill Through the Use of Coalitions and Grassroots Campaigns**

Expand your organization's influence by finding and working with other groups and building coalitions. Determine if your organization should join an existing coalition or form a new, perhaps temporary, coalition for a specific issue. Learn how to identify and mobilize your grassroots volunteers. Keep them informed and on point through newsletters, magazines, email, faxes, phone calls, websites, fact sheets, and podcasts. Keys to effective legislative alerts will be discussed.

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## **12:30 Lunch**

### **1:45 Communicating with Congress and Staff: A Member's Perspective**

A former Member of Congress will provide insight into the many pressures and responsibilities that a member must balance in day-to-day decision-making and policy-making. He will then discuss how members rely on staff to deal with the busy Capitol Hill environment, and how outside interests can communicate effectively with staff and members in this environment. Discussion will include how members set up their offices, what they expect from staff, and whether staff influence members.

## **2:45 Break**

### **3:00 The Work of Personal and Committee Staff**

A panel of congressional staff members will discuss the positions and responsibilities of committee and personal staff, the organization of congressional offices and the work environment on the Hill. They will focus on what staffers need or expect from outside interests, the most effective forms of communication in the post-anthrax era, and how to build strong working relationships with staffers. The staffers will also provide their insights into the dynamics of the 109<sup>th</sup> Congress.

### **4:00 Complete Conference Evaluations; Conference Concludes**

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