

What are the levers of power
and how can you use them for
South Australian Secondary
Principals and public education?

Today's Session

The Levers of Power

Government, Media and Representative Bodies

Applying the Levers in Public Affairs

What is the SASPA ASK?

Levers of Power

There are three key levers that influence and make change in a Westminster System of Government.

1. Government
 - Parliament/Political
 - Bureaucracy/The Department
2. Media
3. Representative bodies/Business/Industry

Lever 1: Government

Members of Parliament
and Ministers



Who are they?

- Leader of the Government
- Minister and their staff
- Leader of the Opposition, the Shadow Minister and their staff
- Minor parties and Independents
- The political parties themselves

What do they want?

- More power
- Problems they can solve, and credit for the solutions:
 - Policy
 - Political
 - Constituent
- To not lose pre-selection / achieve high list ranking

What motivates them?

- Promotion of themselves and their party
- Something to campaign on – the opportunity to cause or solve a problem
- The credit for fixing the problem (Government) and / or causing it (Opposition)



Where do MPs and Ministers get their Public Affairs power?

- Access to Treasury
- Budget cycles
- Ability to create and influence legislation and regulation
- Access to media
- Ability to call and participate in processes e.g. Parliament, Committees, Inquiries and Commissions
- Appointment / interrogation of senior officials
- Allowances to spend on communications & research staff

What holds them back?



- Us! The electors during elections
- Their own party (reshuffles)
- Politics over policy. Process over politics
- Trust

Current political environment in education

- ‘New’ governments at the state and federal level, both ALP
- Closer to the AEU
- Strong interest in equity, wellbeing, early years and student voice
- Yet to demonstrate ‘how’ they will deliver
- Challenging budget environment and a new schools funding agreement.

Discussion

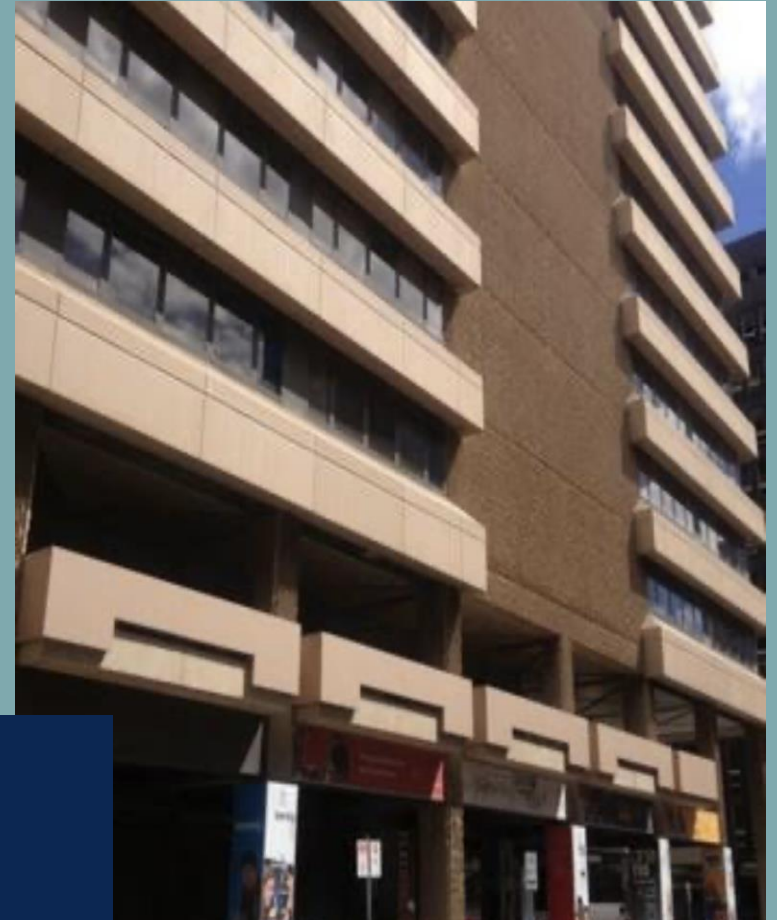
What do you think motivates Minister Boyer?

What influence do you think Minister Clare in the Federal government has on your operations?

What decisions, activities or behaviour of a Minister have impacted on you and your school community?

Lever 1: Government

The Department



Government of South Australia
Department for Education

Where does bureaucracy get their power?

- 'Formal' or 'hard' authorities- legislation, budget approvals and a range of statutory, financial or administrative delegations.
- 'Informal' or 'soft' authorities, which are the mission-critical people and organisations that support and authorise the scope of work.

What motivates them?

- Delivering for the CE and Minister
- Promotional opportunities
- The reputation of their own branch/area
- Their drivers and motivations are not uniform

Discussion

What are the opportunities in the current environment?

What would you like SASPA to be doing more or less of in government advocacy?

Lever 2: Media



What makes news?

Conflict

Drama

Change

Threat

Entertainment



What motivates media?

- **Big stories:** front page news and headlines
- **Personal reputation** and professional advancement
- **Good stories:** conflict/drama/change/threat – increasingly, humour
- **Professional pressures:** circulation/ratings, resources, space, the digital challenge
- **Big business:** high tech, high investment, high salaries, advertising

Where does media get Public Affairs power?

- Access to their audiences
- The power of third party endorsements for government / opposition policy
- The ability to campaign and change public perception on issues / people
- The ability to identify or manufacture issues which will appeal to their audiences that have policy or government solutions – polls, pub lockouts, border security etc.

Discussion

How has the media impacted SASPA and its members in the last year?

Within the frame of the possible – what change would you like to see in media coverage of public education?



Lever 3: Representative Bodies Business Industry



Who are the actors?



- Peak representative bodies (SASPA!)
- Service delivery NFPs and for-profits
- Relevant industry associations / unions
- Boards, CEOs, Executives with CSR interest / responsibilities
- Public education has an unusually large number of stakeholders that compete for departmental and ministerial attention.

What do representative bodies like SASPA want?

- Change to policy, programs, legislation.
- Funding to provide their services to the community from government and community
- To remove barriers for themselves &)also for the sector
- Recognition of the problem and (sometimes) for the role they play in fixing problems



What motivates them



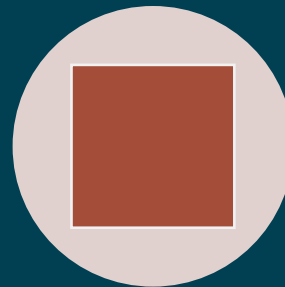
Representing their members



Tangible steps to / progress in fixing problem



Tangible wins (e.g. funding injections)



How do representative bodies get their Public Affairs power?

- Access to a workforce
- Services and contribution to community
- Community consent and trust
- Ability to campaign and lobby on pressing issues

What is a representative bodies interest in Public Affairs?

- There are numerous:
 - Representing their members issues
 - Ensuring legislation, regulation, policies, programs - helps, not hinders
 - Having a seat at the table to design services (policy partner, not rent seeker)

What holds them back?

- Perceived rent-seeking or whining instead of policy partnership
- Lack of access to know-how with respect to public affairs:
 - Failure to express an ask in the terms of benefit to the ask-ee
 - Failure to ask for money within a budget cycle
 - Failure to align the ask with priorities
- Being out of favour – with one organisation being the Government’s “go to” over another
- Overall – lack of ability to put forward a compelling ask to the right person, at the right time

Discussion

How important is it to SASPA to advocate well in this system?

How do we view ourselves as an advocate?

Public Affairs Applied



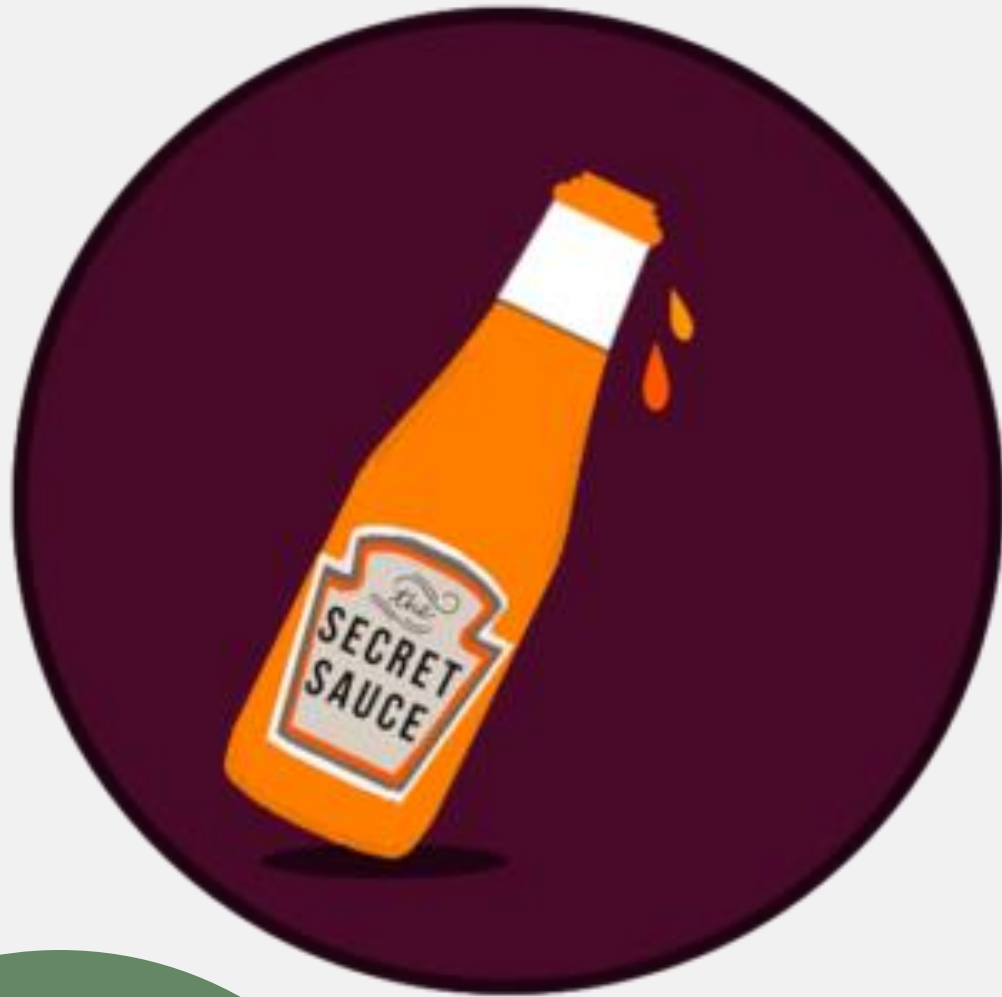
STEP 1: IDENTIFY
YOUR ASK



STEP 2: KNOW YOUR
ALLIES, ENEMIES



STEP 3: HOW TO ASK
FOR YOUR ASK

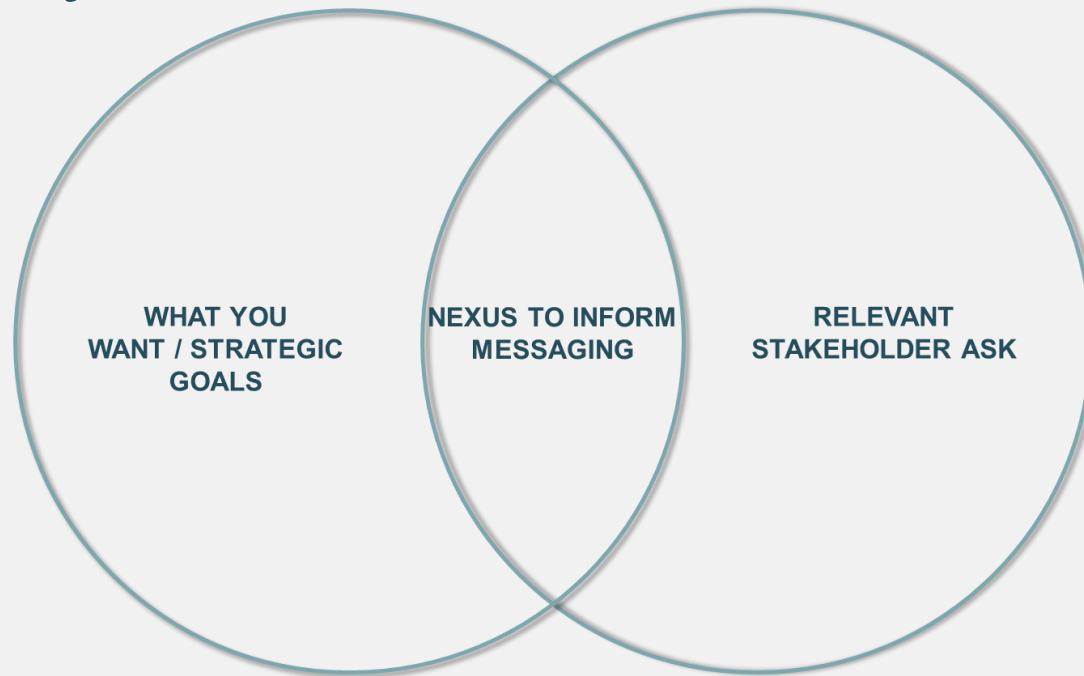


Step 1: Identify your ask

The secret sauce to Public Affairs? Always match your *wants* to the *needs* of the people who can satisfy them

Step 1: Identify your ask (cont.)

The nexus between what you want and what they need is your core ask and/or message set



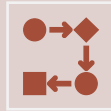
Golden rules for identifying an ask



Make the ask detailed and tangible – e.g. “we need [*ask*] by [*deadline*] so we can do [*solution*].”



Have a carrot and a stick – e.g. “or we may see [*risk*].”



Start big and work back, rather than starting small and then asking for more



Don't ask for everything at once, or you will just get what is easiest to give

Golden rules (cont.)

And importantly, express the opportunity / impact in terms they care about, e.g.:

- Media opportunities
- Support from others – allies, partner organisations etc
- Meets government strategic priorities

Step 2: Know your allies, enemies

- You know what your ask is, great!
- The next step is to consider who might support and oppose it
- Questions to consider include:
 - Are we the right organisation to make the ask or should we swing behind someone else?
 - Can we build a coalition, with other people who will publicly support our ask?
 - Who will lose if we get what we want? When will they say it, and what is our response?
 - Can we mitigate my enemy's argument before it is raised?



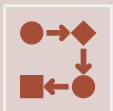
Step 3: How to ask for your ask



At this point you have an ask: you know what you want, who can offer it, what they want, and you have identified the crossover.



You also know who will agree with you, and who will disagree with you getting your ask, and what you will do about it.



The next step is designing activities to make your ask happen and give it the best chance of success.



In successfully asking your ask, the key questions are of timing, channels and sequencing.

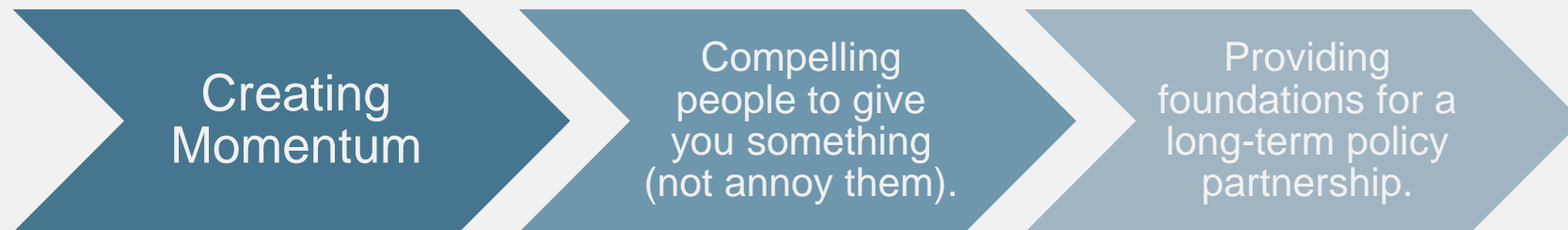
Timing considerations

- Ask for the money within the Budget cycle wherever possible.
- Know other critical dates – ie when a new ICT system has to be implemented
- Always tailor your ask.
- Know the process and who you are making the ask of.
- Don't forget the long-term ramifications of short-term actions.
- That said, if you have to go loud, know the requirements of media.



Sequencing considerations

- With the ask finalised and the channels selected – the final step is to consider the sequencing of activities.
- The scale can include from a small number of items through to a whole campaign.
- Sequencing is key to:



Discussion

What are the SASPA 'asks'?

What do you want SASPA getting after?



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