How to Talk So Legislators Will Listen!

1) **Don’t feel bad if you don’t talk with THE legislator.**
   Aides are top-notch, they write the legislation, they make the agency contacts, they probably have deeper knowledge of your subject (but don’t assume this, especially with state legislators).

2) **Establish a relationship** with your legislator and the aide who is responsible for your county.

3) **Visit with them.**
   Go to Office Hours!
   Visit their offices when you’re in town. Invite them to your office when they are in your town.

   While you are there:
   - Make it clear you are available to help them out. Give examples of the people you serve.
   - Bring along information about what you do. Your expertise. Your programs. Be concise – you could provide your annual report for their file, but 5-6 bullet points might be more effective. (And hit them with new ones every time you visit.)

4) **Tout your successes.** Give them a call. (This helps them to become familiar with your programs.)

5) **Invite them to your events.** (Even if the legislator can’t attend, he/she may send one of their representatives.)

6) Remember, they **can help** with issues regarding the government.

7) If they have questions or want additional information, provide it in a timely manner (**get back to them immediately if possible**).

8) **Have others talk** about how important Extension is to them.

9) Use these strategies with your County Board members as well.


Developed by C Carper, Lafayette County