

Hello, and welcome to Rules for Effective Lobbying, a ten-part Advocacy in Practice mini-series. I'm Ray LeBov. I've worked in and around California's Capitol for more than 40 years; first in the Legislature as Committee Counsel for 17 years and then as a lobbyist for the past 25 years. I also created and run the Capitol Seminars legislative advocacy training program, which is hosted at the McGeorge School of Law in Sacramento, California.

Today I'll be discussing one my Rules for Effective Lobbying that I learned from personal experience. Today we will focus on the importance of being truthful.

The Legislature is an insular, closed-knit community where one's reputation is a paramount factor towards success. Thus, the importance of telling the truth. Let me share an example. When I worked for the Assembly Judiciary Committee, a witness *knowingly* cited a California Supreme Court dissent as the case holding. When it was discovered what he had done, his reputation was shot and he was never taken seriously again.

I recently polled key senior legislative staff and asked them to give their best piece of lobbying advice. There were several recurring themes. Let me quote regarding today's theme.

A Senate committee consultant said, "Tell the truth, the whole truth, and nothing but the truth. Playing hide the ball just pisses me off. I'll figure it out eventually. Remember, there's always next time."

And another Senate committee consultant said, "Don't try to low-ball or lie about the contents of your bill. *When* you are caught your bill will die about as fast as your reputation."

In addition to those reasons, I often cite another important reason for telling the truth. And that is, that it's easier to remember. If all the other good reasons - moral, ethical, and otherwise - don't convince you, the fact that you won't have to remember what you made up should.

Another way to look at this is that your word is your bond. Much of your ability to function in Sacramento depends on trust. Your reputation for living up to your end of a bargain will be one of the most important determinants of your likelihood for success.

That's all for this episode of Rules of Effective Lobbying. Tune in next time. Until then, I'm Ray LeBov, and thanks for tuning in.