

Hi, this is Chris Micheli with the Sacramento governmental relations firm of Aprea & Micheli, and an adjunct professor at McGeorge School of Law. Thanks for joining today's podcast on Tips for Hiring a Lobbyist. My colleague, Ray LeBov, and I have put together tips for hiring a lobbyist. We try to offer here a series of best practices or suggestions that you can use when hiring either type of lobbyist for your organization.

Now, there are numerous items to think about when you're hiring an employee lobbyist or a contract lobbyist. Again, we're going to highlight just a few of the key issues for you to think about when making these hiring decisions.

Now, regardless of the type of individual organization has to hire, one internally as an employee or one externally as a contractor, the fundamental questions to ask yourself are still, what do I and my organization need and what does our lobbying effort need? Remember too, that these individuals that you hire regardless of employee or contractor status, will be a public face for your company, your association, your industry, your trade group. Bottom line is, of course, choose wisely.

Here are some of the key issues that Ray and I believe you need to think about when making lobbyist hiring decisions. For the in-house employee lobbyist role. While hiring a contract lobbyist can address some short-term needs, hiring for an in-house position should have a long-term view in mind. For example, do you bring a newly minted individual in or an experienced individual? You need to diversify your workforce? There are many considerations there. Party affiliation, ethnicity, technical expertise, relationship or relationships with particular elected or appointed officials. Also, internal hiring may allow you to develop an individual who meet perhaps the future needs of your organization. In such a case, be clear regarding mentoring and training that you will in fact be able to provide to this individual. It's also important to involve this person who is the prospective hire, who are they reporting to during the course of the recruitment process, and then when they are being employed.

For the contract lobbyist role, in determining which lobbyist to use, pose at least the following questions when you're in search of a contract lobbyist. What policy expertise do they have or bring to the table? Which political connections do they maintain? Does their skillset match what your organization needs, or what the particular lobbying effort needs? Do they have the personality required to deal successfully with decision makers, as well as allies, even opponents, and the rest of your team? How are these contract lobbyists viewed by their peers? How are they viewed by those officials and staff that they will be advocating before? What kind of track record does the contract lobbyist have? And of course, do they have any conflicts of interest that cannot be easily resolved? Now, there are obviously many other questions that can and should be posed during the screening process, but Ray and I believe that these are some of the key questions that you need to have answers to prior to making any hiring decisions, for either an in-house or contract person. Thanks for joining this podcast on Tips for Hiring a Lobbyist.