



New Government New Challenges Same Approach...



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In the beginning

- Working with government as a Trade Association is challenging as it is a competitive environment
- Far too often Trade Associations expect government to use their limited political capital on their behalf even though they have little or no familiarity with them
- Government will always be very reticent to do so
- What is critical to be successful with government is to build and cultivate a relationship when you don't need anything from them other than be broadly familiar with you/your key objectives



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In the beginning

- That relationship is critical when there is a crisis (COVID) and industry needs government and government needs industry there is no time to build then. It has to already exist
- As we begin with a “new” government” Trade Associations will jockey for position to be seen and heard
- There is a more nuanced, measured and effective way of ensuring the “new government” knows you and will want to build a relationship with you as we have done at CMC these past number of years



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Introducing yourself to government

- All Members of Parliament and those promoted to become Ministers have run for office ostensibly because they want to make Canada a better country
- They get on a plane every week and leave their families to do so
- Their measurement(s) of success and that of others is they have an answer when asked; “What have you accomplished while in Ottawa?”
- When you look at the policy issues and areas of priority for your company the key is to find common cause with government policies wherever possible to build a relationship

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Introducing yourself to government

- Consider working with government as similar to dating
- Government will meet with you; so, you can get the first date, you want/need the second and third dates in order to build the relationship and their confidence in you
- Remember Ministers/their staff are looking for allies to provide them advice, insights, and ways in to push back against the bureaucracy
- Key they hear directly from industry, make sure Board members are present and the main voice(s) at meetings with senior officials. They have the experience, information and are the subject matter experts that decision makers want to hear from

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Working with Government

Government will telegraph their policy objectives in a myriad of ways:

Party platform during an election

Mandate letters for Ministers

Speech from the Throne

Areas of focus for Parliamentary Committees

What the Prime Minister speaks to

Government is agile when it needs to be, but generally, they stay the course based on the above

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Working with Government



- Government, Ministers and their staff need data
- Cutbacks over the years make it challenging for many departments and Ministers to get the quality and quantity of data they need
- If a company/industry is asking government to do something on their behalf without data it will not even be considered
- The data will be used by the Minister and the senior department officials to give them "cover" to act on the file

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Working with Government

There are a number of constituencies to focus on:

- Minister and her/his staff:

- Keep them apprised
- Don't overdo it
- Slow and Steady
- No surprises



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Working with Government

Bureaucracy (Executive Levels)

Deputy Minister/Assistant Deputy Ministers

- They have the decision-making authority
- Critical to have their trust in what you are trying to achieve
- Keep them updated and solicit their feedback in real-time
- Don't try and do an end run to Minister; it won't work

Director Generals/Directors

- They will likely outlast the Deputy and many Assistant DM
- They have years ahead in the government
- Find ways to understand what they are hearing internally

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Other Allies

Always more effective and reassuring for a Minister to see that you have coattails

Ministers are reticent to do something just for one company. You need to demonstrate that you have:

- Built a coalition
- An ask with broad application and benefits
- Other stakeholders willing to speak in support of your objective
- Made very clear what you are seeking to accomplish because you won't be in the room for most of the conversations about your "ASK"

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Media



- Identify where you can work with them and cultivate a relationship
- They have access and much more regular contact with Ministers and senior officials so important that they know your objectives and the WHY?
- They can also offer cover for a Minister depending on how they report on a decision a Minister has made

You have a relationship – What is the ASK?

- If you have built a credible relationship and now need to make an ask of government don't ask for everything right away
- No Minister will give you everything and you will lose much of your hard-earned credibility if you do
- Make it as easy as possible for the Minister and her/his department to say YES
- Once this happens then you can go back and ask for more



Recent examples of CMC working collaboratively with the government



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COVID – We were not starting from scratch

- For the last few years, CMC at senior levels had meetings and discussions with CFIA to make sure they had a clear understanding of work being done in plants and the many mitigation measures already in place
- CFIA's President and the Deputy Minister of Agriculture (their senior teams) had familiarity and confidence in the Board and staff of CMC; its judgement and motivations

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COVID – Mutual trust was in place

- Keeping the shelves stocked was everyone's priority and the trust built up made it much easier because time was not lost or wasted on getting to know each other and building up trust.
- With the initial waves and adjustments to COVID, CMC, CFIA and Agriculture Canada had daily calls.
- CFIA was never directive but rather made recommendations they felt were important and in some cases, industry readily agreed and in other instances industry offered rationale as to why they were not required or would not be helpful. CFIA listened.
- Net result was while the system was strained, it did not break.

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COVID – The ripple effects...

- The trust and confidence CFIA had in CMC's Board and staff extended to discussions they had with other Agencies and Federal Departments where they touted CMC's approach and contributions.
- Public Health Agency of Canada gave CMC and industry a great deal of latitude as a result at the federal and provincial levels.
- Industry's reputation was also enhanced because we did not push back unless it was clear and demonstrable why an "ASK" could not be accommodated. There was, and still is, a sense industry is working on a common cause.
- Industry provided invaluable support, data, and best practices that the government was able to factor into their decision-making process to the benefit of all Canadians

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African Swine Fever

- CMC and its members worked with the federal government to create the ASF Executive Management Board that elevated the ASF threat to the most senior level of officials in government at the federal and provincial level
- CMC and its members have worked with Government to create the zoning working group to have zoning agreements with Canada's main trading partners;
 - Canada has zoning agreements with US, EU, Singapore and Vietnam
 - Work is in progress with Japan, Taiwan and initial discussions with Korea and Philippines
 - Discussions have restarted with the Mexican meat industry about their interest to have a zoning agreement with US and Canada

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African Swine Fever

- CMC sits on multiple working groups with Government and industry to advocate for the pork processors interests
- CMC's Crisis Communications plan has been developed by input from our members, industry, and by working closely and aligning our plan with CFIA
- An ASF website has been created for and by the industry with funding from the government

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Labour

- After almost a decade of lobbying, CMC was able to work with government, our members and union to demonstrate our job vacancies and secure a pilot program run by Immigration Canada
- Agri-Food Immigration Pilot launched 2 years ago allowing a path to permanent residency for temporary foreign workers in our sector

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Traceability Regulations

- CFIA assumed packers could provide the level of detail requested in daily reporting
- We explained this was a costly and disruptive request and we could perform a trace back on a particular animal within a 24–48-hour period as needed
- Senior management directed officials to work with industry to address this and it is well underway

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Conclusion



Political capital is rare and fleeting

Ministers will use it, they want to use it, but they don't want to be embarrassed

- Be judicious in your ask
- Be familiar. But, not overly familiar
- Be factual and data driven
- Be reliable and discreet
- Be patient

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