

THE SHOWALTER GROUP, INC.  
ROOTS OF SUCCESS  
The Resource for Grassroots and PAC Productivity  
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- "The 10 Most Common Grassroots, PAC and Lobbying Influence Mistakes - A Scientific Perspective" by Kelton Rhoads, Ph.D.

**Tips  
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"Beyond Fundraisers and Fly-Ins How to Keep in Touch With Your Legislators All Year."

View a sample at  
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**Recognizing Your Stars**

In the spirit of grassroots and PAC member recognition, as well as my small way to help the economy by promoting retail engagement, I am starting a new column featuring items that may be useful as you recognize your volunteer advocacy and PAC luminaries.

In your pursuit of the perfect gift, do *not* make the prevalent mistake of believing that gifts prompt motivation. Gifts serve as a way to thank people, nothing more. I do not believe (and the social science research shows) that people are motivated by receiving a CD or tickets to a sporting event. However, it is our obligation to recognize them for their contributions to the organization.

The research also reveals that the more personal, significant, and unexpected your gift, the more impactful it will be.

In that spirit, here's what I found this quarter. . . .

For your patriotic volunteers, consider patriotic ornaments from the Christopher Radko collection. [www.radko.com](http://www.radko.com). You can even commission the design of specific ornaments tailored to your organization.

Research-Based  
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**CD Available — "The 10 Most Common Grassroots, PAC and Lobbying Influence Mistakes - A Scientific Perspective" with Kelton Rhoads, Ph.D.**

The Showalter Group is the leading government relations profession in applying scientific influence principles to grassroots, PAC, lobbying and issue management challenges. As a result, organizations can ethically accelerate commitment and activism for their cause.

We can sincerely believe in our strategies based on what other similar organizations do, executive fiat, our organizational history, and our personal value system. However, sincerity doesn't equal effectiveness.

Are you denying the reality of science and how it applies to your government relations work?

If you want to get started on the tested path to influence success, check out our new at [www.showaltergroup.com/products/cd1.php](http://www.showaltergroup.com/products/cd1.php).

## Subscriber Information

This free newsletter is designed to provide beneficial information for those involved in leading grassroots and PAC change. The email list was not purchased. The list is made up of people visiting/registering at our web site and asking for more information, personal contacts, and our speaking audience members. We will not willfully disclose your email address to any outside party without your consent.

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## The Ultimate Motivator - Part 2

In our last issue, I extolled the virtues of trust as an extremely compelling form of motivation. Without trust in the leader and the organization's purpose, it is very difficult to get people to join your grassroots cause or contribute to your PAC.

The enemies of trust I outlined in part one of this article include:

- Regular grassroots and PAC underperformance
- Misplaced loyalty
- Direction changes
- Failure to trust others
- 

There are more enemies of trust. In this concluding article I will review the four remaining trust blockers and the questions you must ask of yourself to begin to eliminate them.

### Inconsistent Messages

If I had a dime for every brochure, Power Point or web site that passionately extols the value of grassroots and PAC advocates, I would be able to personally pay off the national debt. However, many of us talk the talk, but fail to walk the walk.

I am always disturbed when I hear (and I still hear quite frequently) grassroots and PAC professionals talk about "using" their advocates and PAC members. My favorites: "We use our retirees for sensitive issues because legislators listen to them more than our average member," or, "We give advice to each other about the advantages of using certain types of volunteers," and the premier usage: "Use your senior management to raise PAC funds."

I believe that words mean things. The time-tested observation, "Out of the heart the mouth speaks" is true. The "U" word does not inspire trust. It is exceedingly self-serving and demonstrates that grassroots advocates and PAC members are simply a means to an end, rather than thinking, aware individuals who need to be cultivated, not coerced.

Another example of an inconsistent message is board members and/or senior management personnel who "support" grassroots and PAC involvement, but never attend grassroots and PAC events, and even worse (but very common) don't even contribute to the PAC.

Volunteers know by what our management does *not* do whether they are true believers in the value of grassroots and PAC involvement. Canceling regular grassroots training conferences, allowing frontline supervisors to dictate the dissemination of grassroots and PAC communications, and failure to respond to calls to action all communicate a dearth of support for grassroots and PAC efforts. Support means more than just a budget and an office.

Another inconsistent message is proclaiming that "you can make a difference," and then telling volunteers that they have to give political money to be an effective grassroots advocate. A client told me the disturbing story of a grassroots "expert" who actually told their advocate audience: "If you haven't given a financial contribution to your legislator, don't expect to get an appointment with him."

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This spurious conclusion got their attention, but in the worst way. Of course there are some lawmakers who use financial contributions as a time management model, but most do not. When staff tells their volunteers, "You make a difference," but the "expert" tells these same volunteers that "You can't make a difference unless you contribute money" clearly attenuates trust.

### Negative Communications

If we are truly *grassroots* professionals, we should embrace "bottom up" communications. Many times our messages only asking them to do something for us, or tell them what they should not be doing, saying, thinking, etc. It is important to be a carrier of good news. It affects how we are seen in the organization and how much time our advocates will give us in the future.

People attribute negative personal characteristics to those who bring us bad news, regardless of whether they were involved in creating that bad news (Manis, Cornell and Moore, 1974). We generally don't trust those we don't like.

What is your positive to negative communications ratio? Ask your advocates what you can do to help them become more active. Ask for their opinions on your program and recruitment strategies. Ask them if your communications are persuasive. This practice is a habit of the groups who most recently appeared on Fortune magazine's "Power 25" list (Showalter, 2002). They routinely and assiduously seek volunteer feedback.

### Lack of Expressed Gratitude

We must never, ever forget that our advocates and PAC members *volunteer* for duty. Leading a grassroots or PAC program is not a traditional employee-supervisor relationship. Therefore, we must take time to thank them for their efforts, time, accomplishments and progress.

### Inappropriate Reward Systems

I do not believe that rewards motivate behavior; they do, however, set the standard for stellar grassroots and PAC involvement, and help ingrain PAC and grassroots into the organizational culture. There is a plethora of research to support this assertion.

I have seen reward programs that are little more than rewards for "the nicest, most reliable, polite person of the year," rather than rewards that recognize true grassroots and PAC avatar behavior.

How can this happen? Because incredibly, organizations supplant another organization's reward system into their own program. It is important to determine what your desired grassroots outcomes are, and then work backward to reward the behaviors associated with those goals. When we reward those who are less than deserving because of misplaced organizational guilt, volunteer tenure, etc., we cheapen the efforts of those who persevere toward our goals. Remember that you can establish unique awards for a variety of achievements.

### Ask Yourself . . .

- Are your messages about the value of grassroots and PAC involvement consistent with your behavior?
- Do you say you value your volunteers, yet "use them" to achieve goals?
- What is your positive to negative communication ratio with your volunteers?
- Do you express gratitude freely and frequently?
- Do you have a reward system in place that truly recognizes your avatars?



# Teleclass: The Counting Isn't Enough - How to Measure Your PAC Efforts" with Peter Kennerdell, The Kennerdell Group

Thursday, June 10, 2:00 PM EDT

Do you measure your PAC progress beyond receipts and percent of participation? You should! Peter Kennerdell will tell you of many more ways to move your PAC forward with strategic measurement options.

*"Being a PAC administrator, I enjoyed the interactive session with Peter. I think that brainstorming with others is a great way to not only improve your PAC but to meet others." -- Debbie Plummer, PAC Administrator, Cinergy*

In this TeleClass, you'll learn:

- Common PAC fundraising and management measurements vs. smart measurements;
- Measurements that will move your PAC and your government affairs department forward;
- Measurements that will help you better understand your full potential as a member of the government affairs team; and
- Bad and misleading PAC measurements.

*"Peter, of course, is the ultimate expert on PACs. And Amy has the motivational enthusiasm to keep your grassroots efforts on track." -- Cathy Taylor, PAC Administrator, The Timken Company*

## About Peter Kennerdell:

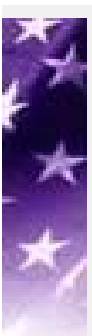
Peter Kennerdell is nationally recognized as a leading authority on political action committees and political involvement programs. Throughout his 25 years in public affairs, he has assisted hundreds of corporations and trade associations with all aspects of PAC establishment, management and fundraising. His work has earned him a solid reputation as a problem solver and innovator.

With his extensive background as a PAC fundraising strategist, he has authored two books on corporate PAC fundraising. He has written and spoken extensively about PAC fundraising, PAC management, grassroots lobbying, citizen involvement in politics, financial and non-financial support of candidates, techniques for gaining visibility with elected officials, campaign finance reform and federal election law. He is a frequent speaker to public affairs professionals, PAC managers, corporate executives, PAC solicitors, PAC boards, corporate employees and trade association staffs and members.

*"You provided me with very helpful and innovative ways to energize my company's PAC." -- Nancy A. Taylor, Vice President, Public Affairs, Aetna*

Peter is well known for his popular and highly rated public affairs training programs. Throughout his lengthy career in public affairs, he has conducted the nation's leading conferences on PACs, grassroots mobilization, state and local government relations, national elections, campaign finance law, technology in public affairs and numerous other public affairs topics. He continues to conduct his highly rated daylong PAC fundraising training sessions and his national PAC and grassroots conference with his Innovate to Motivate partners, Amy Showalter and Tony Kramer.

Peter is the former vice president of the Public Affairs Council and served for nearly 20 years on the board of the Washington Area State Relations Group (WASRG).



## About The Showalter Group, Inc.

The Showalter Group works with associations and corporations that want to increase their grassroots and PAC productivity. We provide highly customized solutions via grassroots consultation, public affairs staff and volunteer training, coaching for public affairs staff, keynote presentations, and grassroots project management.

To book Amy Showalter to speak at your next meeting, or to inquire about our grassroots or PAC consulting services or other products, contact us at:

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