

THE SHOWALTER GROUP, INC.
ROOTS OF SUCCESS
The Resource for Grassroots and PAC Productivity
www.showaltergroup.com

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Issue 5

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Amy Showalter
Grassroots and PAC
Productivity Expert

- Amy's Latest Research Reveals Why Quality Advocates Become De-Motivated
- And The Hits Just Keep on Coming. . .

Amyism

#30

Grassroots Volunteer Satisfaction:

"One of the keys to keeping good volunteers is to improve your services for those who are using them, instead of worrying about who isn't using them. Find out what makes your active participants stay with your program and do more of it."



Research-Based
Benchmarking
Tool/Workshop

—
**The Showalter
Group's
Fortune "Power 25"
Grassroots
Benchmarking
Inventory**

Check it out at
www.
showaltergroup.com

New Research Results! Why Good Advocates Go Bad (It's not what you think)

If you have a non-stop stream of enthusiastic grassroots advocates who are willing to repeatedly contact lawmakers when you ask, read no further. If you have advocates who consistently leverage their personal legislator relationships for your cause, read no further.

If you don't, there's new research that reveals what you need to do to keep them interested and motivated. (and it has nothing to do with plaques and awards) The surprising results are based on Amy's proprietary research with hundreds of quality grassroots advocates.

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The 2002 All-Showalter Team

It's that time of year again, to announce the 2002 All-Showalter Team. The All-Showalter Team is comprised of government relations who embody one or more necessary qualities of a grassroots avatar. A few people in organizations appear twice, and there are "ties" in certain categories.

Read the complete article on page 4

And The Hits Just Keep on Coming. . .

Here is the good and the bad of what I have been hearing in the government relations profession lately. First, the **good news** . . .

Many of us struggle with getting our members involved in issues that are very important to the organization, but are received with a shrug by our audience. This is usually because we have failed to demonstrate the nexus between our issue and their daily concerns.

However, I learned that one of the largest professional societies in the country successfully worked the seam on this antediluvian dilemma. They, like many

Subject: 2003 National Conference for Political Involvement Professionals – If You are Serious About Grassroots and PAC Success

www.InnovateToMotivate.com

Last year, we **didn't** have a workshop on public speaking. Instead, our faculty taught us how to **leverage and strategize** each speaking opportunity to increase PAC income and grassroots participation...

Last year, our faculty **didn't** tell us how to be better writers. Rather, they showed us how to **frame our messages** according to the science of influence...

Last year, we **didn't** present generic "show and tell" sessions on how to motivate your grassroots and PAC members. We revealed **research-based techniques** utilized by the most powerful lobbying groups in the country...

This year, we'll raise the bar once again. Innovate to Motivate, 2003 National Conference for Political Involvement Professionals, January 29 – February 1 at the spectacular new Hyatt Regency Coconut Point on the Naples Coast, Florida. **If you're serious about PAC and grassroots success, this conference is for you.**

Check out the exciting new and challenging 2003 program – Logon to www.innovatetomotivate.com for the conference brochure and registration form.

Tips Booklet!



"Beyond Fundraisers and Fly-Ins: How to Keep in Touch With Your Elected Officials All Year"

See a sample at www.showaltergroup.com

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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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And The Hits Just Keep on Coming. . . (continued)

many of you, have a very diverse membership, with individual and corporate members, all with competing issue priorities.

A particular legislative issue that would have impacted all members, albeit the bottom line of some more than others was designated for a national grassroots mobilization. Traditionally, their corporate members were unresponsive to the organization's pleas for help on this legislation.

However, the organization saw a record response by the traditionally uninterested corporate membership segment. They did this by demonstrating how the issue would impact their corporate members by relating the issue to employee productivity, absenteeism, tardiness, and illness, rather than the notion of why supporting the legislation is "the right thing for our profession."

Many of you have heard me talk about the necessity to include "value alignment" in all grassroots and PAC communications. This is a beautiful example of working the seam between their members' specific values and how those values relate to this issue.

And now, the bad news. . .

For your advocates to differentiate themselves from the thousands of other well-meaning, vocal constituents, they have to do more than just talk about your issues when contacting elected officials.

I was conducting a grassroots advocate skill-building session with members of a national not-for-profit organization. I was illustrating the importance of building legislative relationships, and how the advocates must make an effort to contact their legislator when they don't want anything from them. I recommended that they feel free to contact the legislator on other issues of importance, not just issues that this particular group espoused.

A representative from the organization quickly jumped to his feet to disagree with my by exclaiming that, "You really should only be talking about our issues when you meet with or contact your legislator, even in social situations."

Clearly, this is an idea whose time has not come. While we have a natural zeal to want our advocates to talk to their legislators about "all of our issues all of the time," if we allow that, our advocates morph into serial supplicants.

Now, I'm not advocating that your folks bring a wish list to their legislator. I'm recommending that if they are concerned about various issues, they should feel free to mention those issues when appropriate. It shows that they are a concerned citizen, not a single-issue robot. It demonstrates authenticity.

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How to Prevent Burnout of Your Most Valuable Advocates

If you have a non-stop stream of enthusiastic grassroots advocates who are willing to repeatedly contact lawmakers when you ask, read no further. If you have advocates who consistently leverage their personal legislator relationships for your cause, read no further.

If you don't, there's new research that reveals what you need to do to keep them interested and motivated. (and it has nothing to do with plaques and awards) The surprising results are based on The Showalter Group's proprietary research with hundreds of quality grassroots advocates—the ones who attend your annual Lobby Day events, D.C. Fly-In's, testify before legislative committees, write and meet with their lawmakers when asked, etc. They come from a variety of professions and interests, including, but not limited to: health care, financial services, retail, medical professionals, environmental, agriculture, insurance, small business, and utilities.

The surprising results reveal that it's *not* the lack of organizational recognition, it's *not* the lack of senior leader support for grassroots, and it's *not* the "difficult to understand issues" that cause high-producing advocates to become inactive. There are twelve major research findings, each categorized according to *four major themes*. The four themes include:

1. Disappointing legislator behavior
2. Personal deficiencies, such as lack of confidence and time
3. Dysfunctional government relations/advocacy culture
4. Disillusionment with "the system"

Management researcher and situational leadership expert Victor Vrooms's legendary motivational theory is elegantly simple yet profound. It states: "When reality does not meet expectations, people become demotivated." Thus, these advocates' expectations are not being met. Where did they get these expectations? Many of them can be quickly traced to their source of advocacy information—their government affairs or advocacy staff. (This is precisely why I'm not popular with the "send an e-mail and you can change the world" advocacy crowd. It's clearly a de-motivating expectation.)

The complete research findings include the implications for our profession and *action steps* to help you create an environment that keeps your best advocates engaged year after year.

Amy has developed workshops and consulting systems based on these important findings.

2002 All-Showalter Team

It's that time of year again, to announce the 2002 All-Showalter Team. The All-Showalter Team is comprised of government relations professionals who embody one or more necessary qualities of a grassroots avatar. A few gifted individuals are previous Team members from a different category, yet they exemplify other traits necessary for grassroots success.

Accountability – a candid assessment of our programs' successes and failures builds internal organizational respect for all government relations work. Excuses and rationalizations are unacceptable to accountable government relations professionals.

- Sue Pechilio Polis, American Heart Association

Attention to Detail – Many of us are adequate self-starters; however, we have to be excellent self-finishers. The road to achievement in grassroots is bombarded with incomplete projects and loose ends. How many projects, initiatives, programs do we have that are lying on the shelves, or "in process?" While it's good for some of them to stay on the shelf, it's not a bad practice of getting in the habit of finishing what you start.

- Jacqueline Garry, New York Life Insurance Company
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What people are saying about TSG's Proprietary research-based workshop, "How to Prevent Burnout of Your Most Valuable Advocates"

"This made me think about what we should be doing as we launch our grassroots program. Amy included solid references to motivational psychology and demonstrated a grounding in the science of persuasion, rather than "PR 101."

Kevan Fenderson
Albertson's

"I'm going to use this information to re-invigorate current PAC members' motivation and stimulate interest from potential members. I found most valuable the admonition to review any internal deficiencies in educating and persuading employees on why their views should mirror the views of the company. I found this to be very informative and very forward-thinking. Amy is highly motivated and motivational!"

Carrie Gladney
R. R. Donnelley

"Amy's research will help us understand, influence and motivate our members to stay involved. We're going to analyze how we compel our members to stay involved and meet their expectations, not just those of the lobbyists."

Jeffrey Wollitz
Blue Cross and Blue Shield of Florida

"I learned how to manage our members' expectations. Amy has expertise based on real world experience."

Gregory Knopp
National Association of Realtors

Curiosity/Innovation – Because grassroots activism is not a natural state of being, the astute grassroots leader knows that they always have to find new and innovative ways to get people engaged in their cause. Continuously asking questions as to why something is the way it is, or how it can be made better, is the essence of curiosity, and leads to innovation.

- Carter Headrick, Campaign for Tobacco-Free Kids

Energy – Grassroots and PAC professionals are constantly coaching, instructing, educating, nurturing, and acknowledging the efforts of their members. This level of energy is almost biochemical in nature.

- Laura Feldman, National Committee to Preserve Social Security and Medicare

Focus on Results – Focus creates efficiency. It allows us to ascertain whether or not a particular action will help us move toward our goal. Focus reminds you that if something is not helping you move toward your destination, then it's not important. Less successful people are inflexible on outputs, deliverables, etc., but are flexible on their results. Successful people are focused on the results, and are flexible in how they get there.

- Dana Langley Birdsong, American College of Cardiology
 - Melanie Young, Radiology Advocacy Alliance
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Humor – The key is to take your responsibilities, but not yourself, too seriously. Everything must be kept in perspective. A sense of humor is appealing to PAC and grassroots members.

- Terry Lee Cook, American Motorcycle Association
- Mike Sullivan, State Farm Insurance – Georgia
- Bruce White, State Farm Insurance – South Carolina

Member Respect – Your grassroots and PAC members (whether corporate or individual) know if you truly value their contributions toward your organization's success. Member respect entails seeking out the opinions of your members, and acting on their appropriate suggestions. This expression of trust accelerates their desire to get even more engaged in the process.

- John Sloan, Biotechnology Industry Organization

Risk Taking – Following the herd is rarely a recipe for success. Risky pursuits in one organization may be common practice in another, but if you are not making waves, you're not accomplishing anything. What have you changed or altered from the "usual way of doing things around here?"

- Maureen Cassidy, American Heart Association, Northland Affiliate

Passion – The best grassroots leaders love what they do. While not everyday is bliss, they generally go to work with a sense of mission and belief in their cause.

- Renee Smith, American Heart Association

Planning/Goal Setting – Ad hoc PAC and grassroots efforts are rarely successful. Further, lack of planning and goal setting results in a lack of program momentum. Planning and goal setting increases the likelihood that your efforts will result in an organized, results-oriented program.

- Tracy Winn, Anthem Blue Cross Blue Shield

Presentation Skills – To rally the troops for any cause, you have to speak! Preferably, your presentations are an experience, rather than just a transfer of knowledge.

- Greg Coker, BellSouth

Organization – Juggling multiple projects and initiatives is a constant challenge. The organized government relations professional keeps it all together. The result is a program with momentum and efficiency.

- Susan Goodman, Southwest Airlines

What a stellar combination of talents and skills!

**Congratulations to the members of the third annual
All-Showalter Team.**

