



SIMPLE STEPS FOR SOLUTIONS ADVOCATES

Local news organizations are scaling back their staff, affecting reporters' time to research to amplify their stories on local government issues. Stories now tend to focus nearly exclusively on the conflict rather than the solutions. Solutions Advocates can help officials and readers focus on solutions by following this simple process.

1. Do a web search for solutions by looking up the issue being reported and search for solutions with evidence of success in cities and towns similar to your own. Look for examples of successful remedies to your issue topic from news sources in other cities. Oftentimes similar cities and states already have a policy implemented that could be tailored for your city or town.
2. Research university centers and graduate schools with cover the issue at hand. They often identify best practices that might represent a solution to the issue being debated.
3. Another source of solutions is non-profit and professional associations which specialize in the issue area of your research. Check out their websites or give them a call.
4. Once you've identified a best practice or proven solution, reach out to the reporters covering the story and offer to provide it to them for a follow-up story or to use in further interviews of the officials involved.
5. Additionally, you can have a voice in the conversation by submitting a letter to the editor referencing the solutions you've found.
6. With social media, you can have an important voice. Post your research findings to Facebook or Twitter for your friends to see. Start a conversation, or Tweet reporters your findings and get their feedback.