

DAN GERSTEIN
CONSULTING

The power of persuasion

MISSION

One of the most important things I learned in national politics is that ***the source of true power is the power to persuade***. It may not seem obvious, but the same lesson holds true for any institution, business, or group that depends on winning the trust of consumers or stakeholders to survive and succeed. They may have different agendas, audiences, and resources. But they all share the same critical interest in building public confidence in the stories they are telling and selling – whether it's about soap or on top of soap boxes.

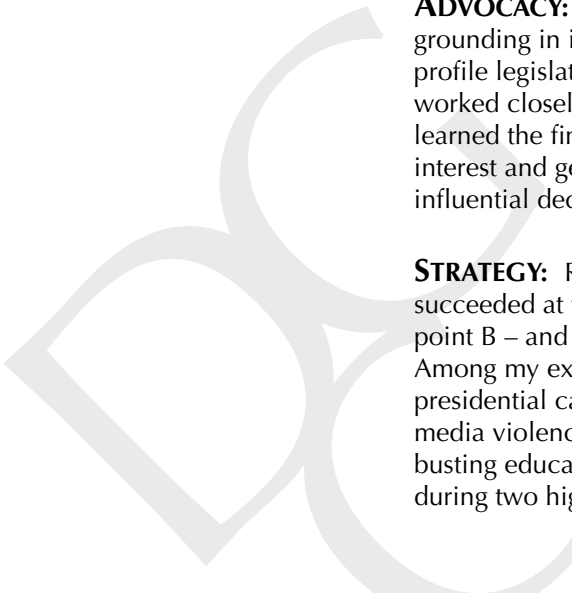
My practice is focused on applying that philosophy to ***meet the diverse communications and advocacy needs of a diverse client base***. To leverage my unique blend of experience, talent, and contacts to help private companies and organizations to maximize their power of persuasion. To hone a client's strategies to break through in a dense and dissonant marketplace, win public debates, defuse potential controversies, and enhance their branding and standing. And ultimately to expand their customer or support base and reach their larger goals – be it attaining higher profits or higher consciousness.

The market is littered with firms that specialize in distinct facets of advocacy and communications, such as PR or public affairs or lobbying. ***I offer something different*** – an integrated bundle of services that draws on the breadth and depth of my 15 years of experience as a reporter, press secretary, speechwriter, policy adviser, and senior strategist for one of the nation's most respected political leaders (Senator Joe Lieberman) and two presidential campaigns.

CREDENTIALS

WRITING: I start with a finely-tuned facility with language, an essential foundation for effective communications. I have been writing prominently throughout my career (four years at The Hartford Courant in addition to 11 years in national politics), and my wide-ranging portfolio includes op-eds in the New York Times, Washington Post, and the Wall Street Journal; speeches that have been republished in leading journals and heard by millions; and a comprehensive campaign agenda for a major presidential candidate.

MEDIA RELATIONS: I also have a finely-tuned understanding of how the media works, as an insider and an outsider, and how to make it work for you. After apprenticing at a top 20 newspaper, I spent a decade on Capitol Hill and on two national campaigns plotting media strategies, nurturing valuable relationships throughout national news organizations, briefing reporters, pitching positive stories, neutralizing negative ones, crafting sound-bites, and booking interviews.



ADVOCACY: Unlike most communications specialists, I have an extensive grounding in issue management and coalition-building. I developed several high-profile legislative initiatives in Congress and helped turn some into law. I also worked closely with outside organizations from across the political spectrum, and learned the fine art of bringing together strange bedfellows to advance a common interest and get things done. And along the way I cultivated close connections to influential decision-makers up and down the political food-chain.

STRATEGY: Regardless of the hat I am wearing, I have long specialized in and succeeded at thinking critically and creatively about how to get from point A to point B – and how to avoid or overcome the hurdles that may stand in the way. Among my experiences: crafting strategic plans for the launch and growth of a presidential campaign; defining a message and agenda for a controversial issue like media violence; determining how to position and secure votes for an orthodoxy-busting education reform bill; and steering the defense of the candidate's record during two highly-scrutinized runs for national office.

SERVICES

My background ideally suits me to tackle the increasingly sophisticated challenges facing many *private actors with public agendas*. Like the major corporation trying to seize the high ground on a complicated issue. Or the grassroots coalition fighting a destructive development. Like the old-line foundation aiming to give currency to a big new idea. Or the fledgling non-profit seeking a brand that will stand out in crowded space.

What these groups have in common, more and more these days, is that they have the same feel and needs as a political campaign – in the end, they want to persuade people to win their approval. What I can offer such a client is *one-stop strategic shopping* – from the soup of message development to the nuts of crisis communications and government relations. That means, concretely, helping them to:

- define their core goals and impediments to reaching them
- distill their most persuasive messages and arguments
- develop creative plans to target those messages to the right audiences
- drive the tactical implementation of those plans

What I can also offer, through my extensive contacts in the political and communications arenas, is a *unique range of access* to the people and resources they need to enlist or persuade. Among them:

- High-level decision-makers on Capitol Hill and in the Administration
- National think tanks, academic experts, and other thought-leaders
- Leading media executives, pundits, reporters and other opinion-shapers
- Top-of-the-line support services – such as polling, opposition/market research, lobbying specialists, advertising, and website design

Not least of all, I can offer *an incomparable value*. Because of my versatility, I can often save a client from having to hire multiple consultants with narrow specialties. And because I don't have to pass along the marked-up costs of several junior staffers, I can provide these high-level services for lower fees than the high-overhead firms typically operating in this space.



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