

A black and white photograph showing a man in a light-colored button-down shirt and dark trousers standing and speaking to a group of people seated in a circle. The man is wearing glasses and has his hands on his hips, gesturing with his right hand. The group consists of several individuals, including a woman on the left and a man in the center, all looking towards the speaker. The setting is a modern office with large windows in the background.

Guide to Hosting a Meet and Greet for Candidates and Members of Congress

Build relationships with lawmakers and influence public policy decisions.

Disclaimer

The content of this packet applies only to federal activities. Please consult your legal counsel or local election attorney on local and state matters.

If you have any questions, please contact David Ashinoff, AGC of America's Director of AGC PAC & Political Advocacy, at ashinoffd@agc.org or (202) 547-5013.



Meet and Greet Checklist

Planning the Meet and Greet

- ☐ Determine the objectives for the meet and greet.
- ☐ Decide who to invite.
- ☐ Craft a written invitation to the candidate or member of Congress.
- ☐ Craft an electronic communication to chapter members or company employees.
- ☐ Decide what information the chapter or member company should share with the candidate or member of Congress prior to the meet and greet.

Conducting the Meet and Greet

- ☐ Determine the duration of the event.
- ☐ Make sure participants have the opportunity to introduce themselves.
- ☐ Have an appropriate chapter or company leader introduce the candidate or member of Congress.
- ☐ Keep to the meet and greet format.

Following the Meet and Greet

- ☐ Send a written thank you note to the candidate or member of Congress.
- ☐ Send an electronic communication to the chapter members or company employees that participated.
- ☐ Forward electronic versions of photographs to the press secretary.
- ☐ Regularly update the candidate or member of Congress on developments affecting the chapter or member company.
- ☐ Use social media to recap the meet and greet.
- ☐ Tell AGC of America about the meet and greet.



Overview

A meet and greet is an event that a chapter or member company hosts to exchange views with a candidate or member of Congress on key issues facing the construction industry. It provides participants with an opportunity to develop relationships with individuals who may be in positions to make decisions affecting their companies, employees, and industry.

Developing relationships early with a candidate or member of Congress through a meet and greet can be a real help in influencing future public policy decisions. Since a strong personal relationship with policymakers is essential to successful grassroots advocacy, a meet and greet is an effective tool in building long-term relationships.

In addition, a meet and greet can help participants evaluate candidates for elective office. The event is an opportunity for candidates to deliver their political messages and policy positions, as well as increase their visibility. Please note that hosting or attending a meet and greet does not obligate anyone to support the candidate in any way.



Planning the Meet & Greet

The following guidelines will help you plan a successful meet and greet with a candidate or member of Congress at the chapter or with a member company:

► **Determine the objectives for the meet and greet.**

What does the chapter or member company want to discuss with the candidate or member of Congress? Will it be only issues and legislation, or will you also ask him or her to talk about their campaign? If the campaign is discussed or an endorsement made, you must follow certain federal election regulations. Please review the applicable [regulations](#).

► **Decide who to invite.**

Anyone can be invited if issues and legislation are the only matters discussed. If the campaign is also discussed, there are different regulations that apply to different types of audiences - the chapter's or member company's restricted class vs. the chapter's general membership or all company employees.

► **Craft a written invitation to the candidate or member of Congress.**

The chapter or member company should provide a range of dates to accommodate busy campaign or legislative schedules. If inviting a member of Congress, dates during congressional recesses are

especially appropriate. PDF your invitation, and send it to the office/campaign scheduler. If you are unsure who to contact, contact the AGC PAC Director at agcpac@agc.org for assistance.

► **Craft an electronic communication to chapter members or company employees inviting them to the meet and greet.**

► **Decide what information the member company should share with the candidate or member of Congress prior to the visit.**

For example, suggest the total number of employees, major projects underway or recently completed, type of construction, safety requirements, equipment, etc.

Conducting a Meet & Greet

With the planning complete, it is time to conduct the meet and greet with the candidate or member of Congress. Follow these recommendations to ensure your event is a success.

► **Determine the duration.**

A meet and greet usually works best when kept to an hour in length. The candidate or member of Congress can greet the participants and talk informally among them before sitting down to discuss the issues.

► **Make sure participants have the opportunity to introduce themselves.**

Begin the meeting by having all participants introduce themselves, mentioning their company name, title, and issues of interest. It can be very helpful to a candidate or member of Congress if participants are wearing nametags.

► **Have an appropriate chapter or company leader introduce the candidate or member of Congress.**

The ideal person is a chapter president or executive as well as a company senior executive. Review the biography of the candidate or member of Congress. It can easily be found on his or her campaign or official congressional website. Highlight key facts and/or accomplishments of the guest's career, but spend no longer than three minutes on the introduction.

► **Keep to the meet and greet format.**

After the introductions are complete, ask the candidate or member of Congress to speak for 10-15 minutes about his or her views on the issues, the upcoming election, and prior work with or knowledge of the industry.

Be sure to allow time for questions and answers and a dialogue on the issues. You may want to designate specific participants to discuss certain issues to ensure that all priority topics are discussed during the meeting.

Following a Meet & Greet

To build on the relationship established by the meet and greet, below are suggestions for follow-up activities:

► **Send a thank you note to the candidate or member of Congress.**

Always thank the guest in writing. The chapter or member company should reiterate the points discussed during the event.

► **Send a thank you communication to chapter members or company employees.**

Recognize participants who helped organize and conduct the meet and greet.

► **Update the candidate or member of Congress on developments affecting the chapter or member company.**

Take care to thoroughly inform him or her of how the chapter's member companies or company will be affected by current legislative proposals. Send annual reports and other chapter or company publications so he or she can keep up with the industry.

► **Use social media to recap the tour.**

Let your Facebook and Twitter followers know that a candidate or member of Congress just met with member company representatives or company employees. It is also important to thank him or her for participating in the event.

► **Forwarding digital photographs taken during the tour to the candidate's or member of Congress' press secretary.**

► **Tell AGC of America about the tour.**

Email the AGC PAC Director at agcpac@agc.org notifying him or her of the tour. Make sure to attach any pictures or press clippings.

Sample Invitation

Below is a sample letter a member company can use when inviting a member of Congress to participate in a meet and greet. It can easily be adapted for a congressional candidate by addressing it to him or her at the campaign headquarters.

DATE

The Honorable John Doe
United States House of Representatives (or United States Senate)
Washington, D.C. 20515 (or 20510)

Dear Representative (or Senator) Doe:

On behalf of [Company Name], I would like to extend an open invitation to you to participate in a meet and greet with our employees (or member company representatives/chapter leadership). As a member of the Associated General Contractors of America (AGC), we encourage members of Congress to visit with their local construction workers for the opportunity to see and understand the importance of the industry firsthand.

[Overview of company in two or three sentences]

This meet and greet is an informal opportunity for you to speak candidly with our employees (or member company representatives/chapter leadership). We expect the entire event to take no more than 60 minutes. Let me suggest the following dates:

- [Insert Day, Month, Date—suggested time frame]
- [Insert Day, Month, Date—suggested time frame]
- [Insert Day, Month, Date—suggested time frame]

We sincerely hope you will accept our invitation to participate. Please let me know at your earliest convenience if one of these dates will work with your schedule. If not, please feel free to suggest alternative dates.

Our employees (or member company representatives/chapter leadership) would truly appreciate the opportunity to have you see their hard work firsthand. Please feel free to contact me at [phone number] or [email] if I can provide any further information or to RSVP.

Sincerely,

[Name]
[Title]



Sample Social Media Messages

A chapter and member company can tweet before the visit their excitement about the impending meet and greet, and then send a picture while the event is going on. They can also use social media to publicly thank the candidate or member of Congress for visiting and engaging with chapter members or company employees.

Be sure to cross-post to the guest's own social media feeds so they can respond. Here is a complete list of the [House](#) and [Senate](#) members' Twitter handles as well as other social media accounts.

Here are a few sample Tweets and Facebook posts:

Twitter:

- Excited to welcome @(candidate/member of Congress Twitter handle) at AGC member company-@(chapter or company Twitter handle) to talk about the construction industry.
- Great to have @(candidate/member of Congress Twitter handle) visit @(chapter or company Twitter handle) today! Glad to hear (his/her) enthusiasm for construction! (attach picture with lawmaker)
- Thanks to @(candidate/member of Congress Twitter handle) for promising to help advance construction priorities after visiting @(chapter or company Twitter handle) today! (Attach picture with lawmaker)

Facebook:

- Thank you to (candidate/member of Congress Name) (Tag his or her official Facebook page) for visiting (Company Name)'s (Project Name) jobsite in (City Name) today! We had a great discussion with (him/her) about the issues important to our company, its employees, and the construction industry! (Attach picture with lawmaker)



Federal Election Regulations

Depending upon the makeup of the audience, the following federal election rules apply if there will be discussion of a candidate's campaign. If a member of Congress is invited to talk only about issues and legislation, these rules do not apply.

Please confirm with the member of Congress' staff ahead of the meeting.

Before the general membership:

- If a federal candidate is endorsed and costs to make the endorsement exceed \$250, the expenditures must be reported to the Federal Election Commission.
- A federal candidate may ask for support and leave behind information on how an individual can contribute or volunteer.
- The chapter or company cannot solicit or direct contributions to the candidate.
- Opposing candidates must be permitted with an equal opportunity to appear before the same group, if requested.

Before the restricted class:

The restricted class of a corporation consists of the executive and administrative personnel, shareholders and their immediate family members (of adult age). The executive and administrative personnel are defined as employees who are paid a salary rather than on an hourly basis and have policy-making, managerial, professional or supervisory responsibilities. First-line, salaried supervisors who perform essentially the same duties as the hourly employees they supervise are not included. Employees must be U.S. citizens or hold a green card.

The restricted class of a chapter consists the individual at each member company with whom the chapter normally conducts the association's activities. Typically, this person is an owner, CEO, COO, Vice President or senior executive.

- The chapter or company may endorse a candidate. However, reporting will be required if endorsement communication costs exceed \$2,000 per election.
- A candidate may solicit contributions or volunteers.
- The chapter or company is prohibited from distributing campaign materials, but can distribute original content about the candidate or his or her positions on specific issues.
- You are not required to grant a request by an opposing candidate seeking a comparable experience.

