Shaping your business environment

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Managing both the amount of change and the rate of change is now a critical skill set required by people in business.

There are a number of business tools available to you to help manage change. One of which needs to be your ability to positively influence decision makers who help you shape the future by:

- Creating an environment for your business to succeed
- Removing the handbrakes which enable you to deliver the balanced and sustainable business growth that you aspire to.

While there's no universal formula for effective advocacy, experience shows that advocacy is most effective when it is planned systematically.

Here are 4 rules of advocacy:

- Make it easy for your target to say YES - When setting your advocacy goal and objectives ensure that you are presenting a solution or a range of solutions to be chosen from. Do the hard work for your target and make it easy for them to say YES!
- You may well share your desired outcome with a number of like-minded people. When representing many stakeholders maintain group alignment – present a common view. Presenting an aligned group view to the target leaves them with no wriggle room – otherwise they become the referee in the middle – with an excuse not to make a decision. There will be others competing for attention or with different views - if your group doesn't have a single voice it will be harder to compete.
- If you are going to ask your target to "eat an elephant" – feed it to them one bite at a time. Persuade your target to commit to a number of small steps in support of a proposal. As they take these small bites, you can ask them to take larger bites. As they eat more and more they become increasingly supportive of the proposal until ultimately they become a strong advocate for the change you want to see.
- Successful advocates are able to articulate issues in a way that inspire and motivate others to take action. Be careful not to become the "nutter". Extreme behaviours will trigger extreme responses.