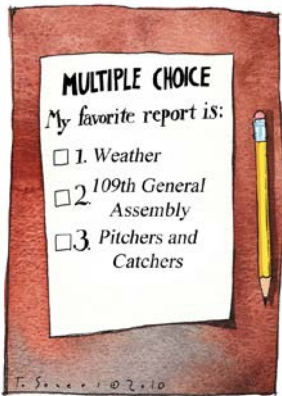


Pitchers and Catchers – Jeremy Elrod



Ever since I can remember, I've been a fan of baseball. I watched baseball as a kid, read books about baseball, and had several fantasy baseball teams over the years. It was the first sport I played as a kid, my dad was a coach, and even with the thrill of football season I am still drawn to the nation's pastime. My enthusiasm for the sport has waned at times, after the last strike and during the steroid era, but I still love the game now as much as ever.

As a baseball fan, the most hopeful time is spring training, and the date when pitchers and catchers report to camp being the signal that winter is over, and baseball season is just around the corner. But before spring training, before players report to their Florida or Arizona camps, there is a lot of hard work, planning, and strategizing by teams and players. Through all this preparation, through trades and signings, a team is built that fans hope will be a winner.

A legislative session, and preparing for one, is a lot like this cycle of baseball. After a session is adjourned for the year, time is taken to decompress after the hectic last weeks of season when a flurry of bills are passed in just a few days. After a period of mental rest, the first thing to do is to figure out what happened. Evaluations are made about what occurred during the past session, understanding how new laws will affect our industry, and then disseminating that information to all our members.

In every legislative off-season, contact with legislators is still important to keep up relationships. This is most important with local system managers as legislators regularly value local opinion and how things affect people in their district above everything else. While TMEPA does everything it can to see legislators in the off season, the most valuable asset are system managers that regularly see and talk with their legislators at rotary club, chambers of commerce, and other local meetings.

As the off-season goes along, TMEPA is always preparing for the next legislative session. This helps us because we will either be playing defense against adverse legislation, or offense in support of legislation or if TMEPA is carrying its own legislation, or some years both. We keep our ear to the ground listening to what may be coming, and watching out as issues crop up that could result in legislation.

Some years, TMEPA may carry legislation to the legislature. Depending on how difficult the bill may be to pass, this requires assembling a team to achieve passage. Here it's important to engage system managers, partner organizations, and others. For TMEPA's municipal electric broadband expansion bill, we are going up against several teams with deeper pockets and deeper benches of lobbyists. This means TMEPA must make smart decisions as it puts together its team and strategy as we go up against teams that have won year after year. With legislative sessions getting shorter every year, and legislators being limited in the number of bills each of them can file, the off-season is more important than ever to ensure a successful session/season.

As the off-season moves toward the start of the legislative session, excitement builds just as it does in baseball as spring training gets closer. The final touches are put in place, because when session starts it's an every day battle to get a bill to passage. With the frantic pace of session, just like teams that go through a season, only small tweaks or changes can be made here and there.

This off-season, we're getting very excited for the arrival of legislative season, similar to the arrival of pitchers and catchers which signal the start of baseball season. We've put together a team and a



strategy, and we're looking forward to seeing them on the field. Just like baseball when spring training starts and hope is with every team that this year will be a winning year, we have the same excitement and hope after an off-season of hard work.

This past baseball season serves as encouragement as TMEPA is again supporting legislation that would allow for expansion of municipal electric broadband. This issue on yearly basis has gone down to defeat, with only lately in the past few years seeing strong movement and momentum. In baseball, the Kansas City Royals on a yearly basis were a team that struggled to even get as many wins as losses, until recently they started seeing success. They started winning even without the big budgets that other teams have, or the built in advantages that the usual perennial winners see. Despite being a team without huge star power, they made the World Series in 2014, having a great season but falling short. That momentum carried over to 2015 when the Royals won the World Series. They beat better funded teams, and saw the fruit of years of work.


Legislative

PITCHERS & CATCHERS: PR tips for pitching a perfect game

<div style="background-color: #455a64; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">VISITOR 0 0 0</div> <div style="background-color: #455a64; color: white; padding: 5px; font-weight: bold; font-size: 1.1em;">HOME 6 1 7</div>	<p>Change Speeds Don't pitch the same story the same way to all reporters. Not every journalist reacts the same way to all pitches, so adjust your "throw" (which reporters prefer email vs phone for example) accordingly for the best hit.</p> <p>Be Patient Some pitches take months to result in a story. Some are the result of news and get to that home plate right away.</p> <p>Calling Foul Be honest. Always. Say what you mean and mean what you say. If you don't know, just say so — you can always offer to find out if you don't have the answer (but never fake it).</p>	<p>Be a Good Announcer Tell your clients' story in the best way you can — be creative, incorporate language and, if possible, visual content that makes a reporter want to stop, listen, and take note.</p> <p>Take That Stretch Get up and move around from time to time, to change your perspective and see things differently. Stretch your body, take a five minute break for your mind, and you'll find a renewed enthusiasm, energy and flow of ideas.</p> <p>Get Tough Remember that the goal is to finish, not always to win. Just like baseball, you can't win 'em all. When you take a step back to recalibrate, your zen viewpoint may just score you more points.</p>
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Change It Up
In PR, writing is essential and yet our 'signs' of nonverbal communication — those emails or texts we rely so heavily on — can sometimes be misread. Pitching on the phone is a way to tell your story so that it better resonates; a way to get your point across with emotion and passion. Influencers such as the media will benefit from hearing your tone and enthusiasm for the story idea you are sharing and potentially selling to them.

Pitch Through the Pain
Sometimes you just can't get the ball in the strike zone. Don't get discouraged. Keep at it and eventually you'll get the right pitch over the plate and in the glove.



TMEPA

The past several years have seen momentum toward allowing municipal electric systems to expand where they offer broadband, but we have come up short. We're up against better funded teams of lobbyists and campaign donations, but we are encouraged by our growing momentum and the fact that we're on the side of right: giving people and businesses the services they need to have a better life. I'm excited about the coming legislative session, and can't wait hit the field.