

Tips for Brokers & Consumers meeting with MPs

The MFAA welcomes and encourages brokers and consumers to engage with their local Members of Parliament (MP).

In light of the Royal Commission's final report which was handed to the Federal Government on 1 February 2019 and publicly released on 4 February 2019, the time is now ripe for the mortgage broking industry and those who benefit from its services, to make their collective voices heard.

With that goal in mind, the MFAA would like to offer you a few tips on how to engage with your local MP and ensure any meeting and interaction is as productive and effective as possible.

1. Making contact

- In the first instance, the best way to do this is to email your local Federal Member of Parliament's office email address (found on the MP's website) to request a meeting.
- Keep this email brief and to the point. Advise the reason for your meeting request and provide dates and times that you are available to attend the MP's office.
- If you have not heard back within a week feel free to phone the MP's office to follow-up. (MP's receive hundreds of emails per day so don't be offended if your email slipped through the cracks).
- Remember, always be respectful of the MP's staff as they are the gatekeepers and take their role very seriously.

2. Greeting the MP

- Firstly, don't be late. The MP has significant demands on their time and will not appreciate being made to wait.
- Remember, there is no reason to be intimidated or overwrought by the occasion, this is precisely the job of the MP, to listen to the concerns and issues of his or her constituents, so by meeting your MP you are doing the right thing.
- Be polite and friendly, your goal is to influence the MP by informing them of the good work being done by mortgage brokers and the value they provide to the consumer (you catch more bees with honey than vinegar).

3. The Meeting

- Come prepared. You will want to have a good idea of what you would like to communicate to the MP in advance. To assist with your messaging, the MFAA offers a comprehensive brief about the mortgage broking industry and the MFAA's position in response to the Royal Commission. Feel free to request that from us to assist with your meeting.

- Anticipate a 10-minute meeting at best. This means you need to communicate your most important messages straight away, to ensure you do not run out of time.
- It is unlikely, but in case the MP is too busy to meet with you, there is the chance you may meet with an adviser. Do not take offence to this, sometimes the MP is pulled away on urgent business which occasionally cannot be avoided. Be assured the MP's respect the opinions of their advisers and rely on their support, so conduct the meeting with the adviser as you would have with the MP and it will still be worth your while.
- Leave some informative material with the MP to peruse in their own time following your meeting. This is common practice and the additional information and guidance is always appreciated by the MP.

4. Social Media & Wrap-up

- MPs love social media, so don't forget to get a picture with your local member at the conclusion of your meeting, just be sure to secure their permission to make the image public and also inform them of exactly where you will be posting it.
- Be mindful that MPs consider these meetings to be strictly off the record. As such, it is inappropriate to comment publicly (to media, or on social media, etc) about the specific contents of the meeting. This would leave the MP feeling they cannot trust you.
- Thank the MP (and the adviser) for their time, leave with them the informative material, and importantly offer your card and suggest that the MP can contact you if they have any further queries about what you have discussed.

This concludes a brief guide to the etiquette of meeting with your local MP. If you have any queries, please don't hesitate to get in touch with us.

All the best and happy advocating.



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