

8 QUESTIONS TO ASK BEFORE SPEAKING OUT



BY TIM EBNER / APR 20, 2020

(Martin Barraud/Getty Images)

Is now the time to speak up or stay quiet? Amy Showalter, principal of the Showalter Group, Inc., guides association leaders through questions that can help them decide if the timing is right to take on a new issue. Here are eight questions to consider before making a move.

1. **Does this issue matter to members?** How do you know?
2. **Who's pushing the issue**, and is that person or group a credible actor or threat?
3. **How is the new position** connected to longer-term advocacy and policy work? Or is it virtue-signaling without lending credibility or action to the issue?
4. **What are the potential gains** and setbacks of the position? Do gains outweigh setbacks?
5. **Who must be involved in deciding** what position to take? Is that group adequately prepared to move quickly when the timing is right for the issue?

6. **Where do you have member support** for the position? Where do you not?

7. **Will the position resonate with elected officials,** the media, or the general public? Why?

8. **How will your position evolve** or change a year from now? Several years from now?
