INVOLVED

Best Practices for Representatives

(1) Keep the actual question to one simple sentence

This shows better across push notifications, email subject lines, or text messages and is easy enough to get people to read and want to leave their input.

Ex. Should noise suppressors be allowed on firearms?

(2) Provide necessary background info in the background section

Good things to include when applicable are:
- Reason for asking the question
  - ex. upcoming bill, received a lot of complaints, want to gather data for X…
- Quick points from both sides of an argument, which let people know you are open-minded
- External link to bill or issue for people who want to do more research

(3) Don't be afraid to include your initial take in the background info, as long as you are open about new opinions

This seems counterintuitive but letting people know how you stand on something shows honesty and that you are still interested in hearing counter-arguments.

Ex. "We are leaning this way…, Received a lot of emails supporting X which we are currently against, but wanted to hear what everyone else thought…"

(4) Closing the poll and displaying results are the same thing. If there is a question that you don't want to display results for, just keep the poll open

Ex. Sharing results for a question about safety, where 98% of people feel safe, isn't very helpful to the 2% who don't feel safe. Looking into their comments, location, and demographics is probably more useful than sharing the results of that particular question.

(5) Display results as often as you can and feel comfortable doing so

People like seeing this information, especially when it pertains to a specific decision being made. Transparency is key to participation.

(6) Provide updates to polls once responses slow down, you want to display results, or the issue is being resolved

A significant part of keeping people engaged and validated is feedback from your administration that their voices are actually being considered. Giving a response to each poll lets people know what you learned and why they're participation was worth their time.

Ex. Thank you all for your feedback, we are using this data for X, Y, or Z

(7) Only post on relevant issues and limit questions to a couple per month

Receiving multiple questions a week that don't pertain to anything relevant is the quickest way to get people to turn off notifications from you. Keep questions focused around solving something and don't feel obligated to post; people will be more engaged when you do.

(8) Just getting started and not sure what to ask?

Consider starting off with an open-ended question that you leave permanently available to gather feedback.

ex. Do you have any questions you would like us to ask?

Thank you all for joining Involved! I wanted to start off by leaving an open-ended post to gather potential questions from everyone. So if you ever have any questions you would like to see us ask, just submit your suggestion as a comment below.

Thank you and look forward to hearing from you all,
Insert Name

(9) Don't think of the polls as a strict "vote"

Questions can be used as a means to gather public opinion as well as a way to hear different sides of an argument. Just because the result of a question went one way does not mean you need to support that decision as long as you are open with your thoughts.