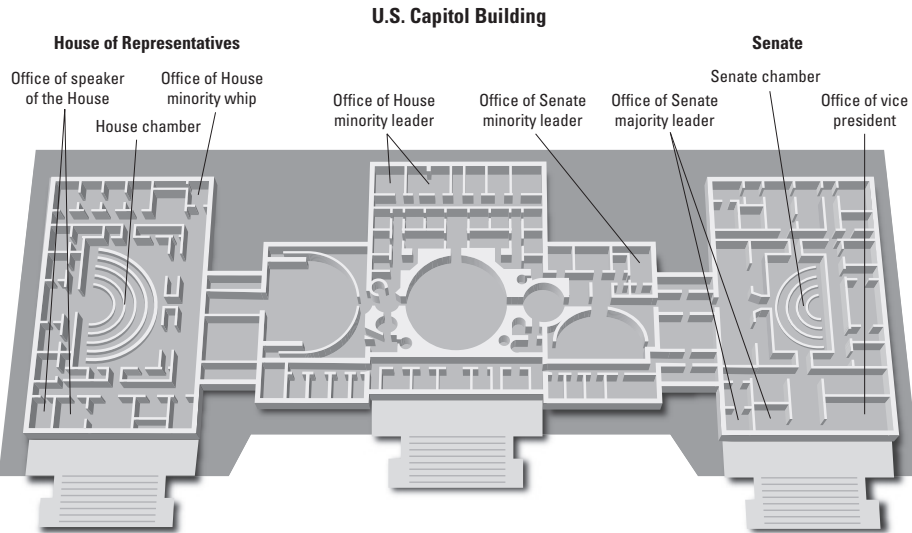


Selecting Congressional Office Space

Step 1 Carefully analyze the information on the placard and the map of the U.S. Capitol building below.



Step 2 Discuss each of these questions with your partner:

1. What interesting details do you see on these two maps?
2. Who has offices inside the U.S. Capitol building? Why do you think these people have their offices there?
3. In which buildings do most members of the House of Representatives have their offices?
4. Of the three possible office spaces listed below, which would you recommend that your congressperson select and why?
 - Second-floor office suite in the Rayburn Building
 - Third-floor office suite in the Longworth Building
 - First-floor (ground level) office suite in the Cannon Building (One of the three offices in this suite is not connected to the other two offices, but is instead a few yards down the hall.)

Step 3 Find the corresponding section in *Student Handout: New Congressional Staff Orientation Notes*. Record the most important thing you learned that would help your new member of Congress be an effective legislator.

Step 4 Organize the packet materials and exchange them for a new orientation packet.

Hiring Congressional Staff

Step 1 Carefully analyze the information on the placard and the table below.

Average Congressional Staff and Offices				
Chamber	Washington, D.C., Staff	District/ State Staff	Total Personal Staff	District/ State Offices
House of Representatives	8.2	6.3	14.5	2.2
Senate	22.4	12.2	34.6	4.5

Source: Congressional Management Foundation, 2001, 2002

Step 2 Discuss each of these questions with your partner:

1. What interesting things do you see in the organizational chart for a typical Capitol Hill office?
2. Which chamber has more staff members? Why do you think that is?
3. What qualities should your congressperson look for when hiring for each of these positions? (Consider age, background, and experience.)
 - Chief of staff
 - Senior legislative assistant
 - Intern

Step 3 Find the corresponding section in *Student Handout: New Congressional Staff Orientation Notes*. Record the most important thing you learned that would help your new member of Congress be an effective legislator.

Step 4 Organize the packet materials and exchange them for a new orientation packet.

Requesting Committee Assignments

Step 1 Carefully analyze the information on the placard and the description below.

Suppose the following is true of your congressperson's district:

- The district is a mixture of mostly rural areas and small towns. Farming is a major industry.
- City A is the largest city with a population of about 65,000. City B is the second largest city with a population of about 44,000.
- A large state university is located in City A. Many residents of the district are employed by this university.
- An Air National Guard base and a huge Department of Defense center are located in the district. Combines, they employ thousands of residents in the district.

Step 2 Discuss each of these questions with your partner:

1. What industries play an important role in your congressperson's district?
2. Which of the exclusive committees would you recommend your congressperson join? Why?
3. Typically, only experienced members of Congress are assigned to exclusive committees. What major committees and nonmajor committees would you recommend that your congressperson request from party leaders? Why?

Step 3 Find the corresponding section in *Student Handout: New Congressional Staff Orientation Notes*. Record the most important thing you learned that would help your new member of Congress be an effective legislator.

Step 4 Organize the packet materials and exchange them for a new orientation packet.

Choosing and Working in Caucuses

Step 1 Carefully analyze the information on the placard.

Step 2 Discuss each of these questions with your partner:

1. In 3-5 words, summarize the issues each of the following caucuses are concerned about.
 - The Blue Dog Coalition
 - Congressional Diabetes Caucus
 - House Tea Party Caucus
 - Congressional Travel and Tourism Caucus
 - Congressional Caucus on Foster Youth
 - Congressional Bike Caucus
 - Congressional China Caucus
 - House of Representatives Sustainable Energy and Environment Coalition
2. What role do caucuses play in influencing policy? Give examples.
3. Which caucuses would you recommend for your congressperson to join? Why?

Step 3 Find the corresponding section in *Student Handout: New Congressional Staff Orientation Notes*. Record the most important thing you learned that would help your new member of Congress be an effective legislator.

Step 4 Organize the packet materials and exchange them for a new orientation packet.

Working on Legislation

Step 1 Carefully analyze the information on the placard.

Step 2 Discuss each of these questions with your partner:

1. What interesting information do you see on the diagram?
2. Approximately what percentage of bills and joint resolutions introduced in 2012 were actually signed into law?
3. According to the diagram, between which steps in the process do most bills “die”?
4. Who are some of the groups or individuals that might kill a bill and keep it from becoming law? Why might they oppose a particular bill?
5. What bill might your congressperson propose to help your district?

Step 3 Find the corresponding section in *Student Handout: New Congressional Staff Orientation Notes*. Record the most important thing you learned that would help your new member of Congress be an effective legislator.

Step 4 Organize the packet materials and exchange them for a new orientation packet.

Doing Constituent Casework

Step 1 Carefully analyze the information on the placard and the list below.

- Members of Congress receive more than 85 million letters per year.
- Members of Congress receive more than 200 million e-mails per year.
- On average, House staffers spend about half their time addressing constituents concerns.
- There are 535 members of Congress.

Source: "How to Contact Congress," Hobnob Blog, TheCapital.net, 2010. "Constituent/Case Work (CongressionalGlossary.com)," Hobnob Blog, TheCapitol.net

Step 2 Discuss each of these questions with your partner:

1. About how many letters and emails does your congressperson receive from constituents per year? How do you think your congressperson address all these concerns?
2. Examine the inbox of your congressperson. What types of casework issues does your congressperson's staff work on?
3. Which constituent e-mails would you recommend your congressperson address first? Why?
4. Why do you think casework is such an important part of what members of Congress and their staff do?

Step 3 Find the corresponding section in *Student Handout: New Congressional Staff Orientation Notes*. Record the most important thing you learned that would help your new member of Congress be an effective legislator.

Step 4 Organize the packet materials and exchange them for a new orientation packet.

Protecting the Interests of the District

Step 1 Carefully analyze the information on the placard and the table below.

Past Projects of Congress

Amount Set Aside	Project
\$2 million	Appalachian fruit laboratory in Kearneysville, West Virginia
\$206,000	Wool research in Montana, Texas, and Wyoming
\$2.3 million	Coral research at the Hawaii Institute of Marine Biology
\$3 million	Chesapeake Bay oyster restoration in Maryland
\$1.5 million	Mobile firing range for the Texas National Guard
\$1.2 million	Alternate Energy School of the Future in Nevada
\$2.8 million	Army Corps of Engineers investigation of shoreline in South San Francisco, California
\$200,000	Small business development center at Shawnee Community College in Illinois
\$125,000	Nursing workforce education and training initiative at Pace University in New York
\$2.3 million	Ice Age National Scenic Trail in Wisconsin

Source: Citizens Against Government Waste, 2010 Congressional Pig Book Summary, www.cagw.org

Step 2 Discuss each of these questions with your partner:

1. What interesting details do you see in the cartoon?
2. Based on this cartoon, what are some ways that legislators protect or work for the interests of their districts?
3. What might be the consequences if all legislators acted this way, all the time?
4. What types of projects has Congress set aside money for?
5. Would you recommend your congressperson support projects like these for your district? Why or why not?

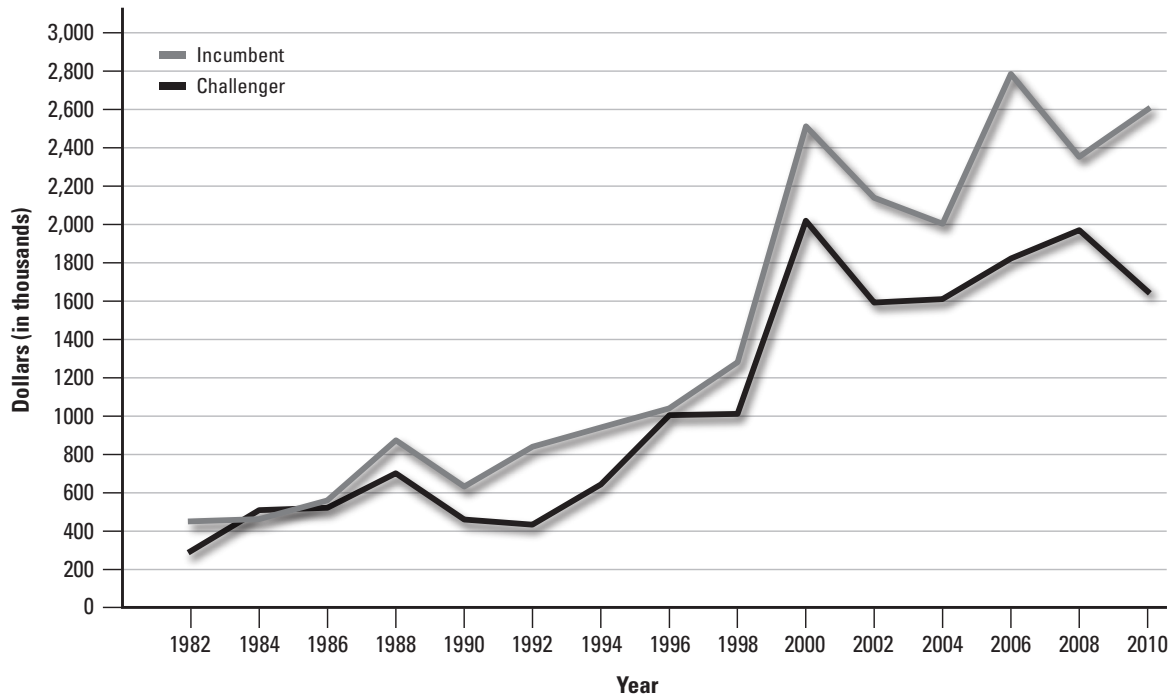
Step 3 Find the corresponding section in *Student Handout: New Congressional Staff Orientation Notes*. Record the most important thing you learned that would help your new member of Congress be an effective legislator.

Step 4 Organize the packet materials and exchange them for a new orientation packet.

Running for Reelection

Step 1 Carefully analyze the information on the placard and the graph below.

Average Spending for Incumbents and Challengers in the House, 1982-2010



Source: Center for Responsive Politics, OpenSecrets.org.

Step 2 Discuss each of these questions with your partner:

1. In general, what percentage of incumbents in the House and Senate are reelected?
2. Why do you think such a high percentage of legislators are reelected?
3. In general, who spends more money in campaigns: incumbents or challengers? Is that trend increasing or decreasing?
4. What connections might you make between the information on these graphs?

Step 3 Find the corresponding section in *Student Handout: New Congressional Staff Orientation Notes*. Record the most important thing you learned that would help your new member of Congress be an effective legislator.

Step 4 Organize the packet materials and exchange them for a new orientation packet.