

Elected officials often rely on the media, lobbyists, or their own research to make decisions — however, [research](#) shows that in-person meetings with constituents can have an even more powerful influence on their decision-making. They are a great way to use your own research and personal experiences to offer another point of view on an issue. Follow these tips, based on extensive experience, to get the most out of meetings with elected officials — and remember, you are acting as an “ambassador” for Kratom, the Kratom industry, and the Kratom community.

What to Bring

- 3-4 copies of a small information packet (be mindful that they do not have time to read long materials)
 - Color picture of the Kratom leaf to illustrate that Kratom is natural
 - KTA’s [Kratom: Fact vs. Fiction](#)
 - Impartial, mainstream news article (e.g. Associated Press, Reuters, NBC, CBS, ABC, NPR, etc.) fairly representing the Kratom consumers’ point of view
 - A 1-page personal testimony that includes your name, age, occupation and contact information; being very careful not to make any medical or treatment claims ([check KTA’s claims guide for suggestions](#))

The Meeting

- Do:**
- Dress professionally (no jeans, shorts, tank tops, flip flops, or ball caps)
 - Cover any tattoos or unusual piercings
 - Research the lawmaker to get a sense of their key issues, and thank them for taking a position on something important to you. See if you have anything in common you can bring up to “break the ice”
 - Be respectful and positive
 - Keep in mind that time will be very limited — you may only have a few minutes
 - Make sure to use their correct title — Congressman/Congresswoman or Senator
 - Prepare your 1-2 minute “elevator speech” testimony. Practice it out loud. If you are meeting for a specific reason other than providing general information, make sure to include exactly what you are asking of them (e.g. Vote against the ~~~~~ bill, contact the DEA and request that they do not emergency schedule Kratom, etc.)
 - Make sure to have a working, basic knowledge of any legislation/action. Review KTA’s applicable [legislative briefs](#)
 - Try your best to make direct eye contact at all times

- Do not:**
- Lose your temper with staff or elected officials — always be polite and pleasant, even if you disagree
 - Be aware of your body language. Try not to tense your muscles or clench your jaw
 - Alternatively, also try not to come across as anxious or fidgety
 - Use phrases like “as a taxpayer...” or “I pay your salary”
 - Consume Kratom in the meeting or offer them Kratom
 - Engage a reporter, as you will often run into them at a State House or Congressional building, unless you have cleared the interview through KTA’s communications team

Terms to Avoid + Substitutes

Don't Say	Try Instead
Use (user)	Consume, consumer
Withdrawal/dependent	Stopping long-term daily use can cause discomfort along the lines of a person skipping their daily cup of coffee
Euphoric/intoxicated/high	Focused, calm, general sense of well-being
Drug/substance	Plant, natural
Opioid, K2, Spice, Heroin, etc.	(Avoid comparisons, even if you are trying to say that they are not alike)
Anything covered in the treatment claims guide	See guide

3 Points to Hit in the First 3 Minutes

1. Introduce yourself — make sure to include where you live in the representative’s district/state, your occupation, and any other basic facts about yourself as a responsible, productive adult. If you have business cards, provide one to everyone present at the meeting right after handshakes. The staff will often give you their business cards as well
“My name is Jane Smith, and I’m a teacher from Pueblo, Colorado. I am the mother of three girls and love to volunteer at the local animal shelter.”
2. Clearly state what you want to discuss (which bill or action, as well as its relevance to them), and give your stance
“I would like to speak with you about H.R.~~~~, the ~~~~~ bill, which is coming up for a vote in your committee next week. I am very concerned about this bill and the consequences it will create for me and many of your other constituents if passed.”
3. Give a description of the Kratom plant and its benefits
 Keep in mind that this person may or may not have heard of Kratom, and may not have a good understanding of it. Also be careful not to make medical claims, using language suggested in KTA’s [claims guide](#).

After you hit these three basic points, provide them with your information packet, tell your story, conclude with your request and be sure to thank them!

Tough Questions and How to Answer ?

Question	Response
Shouldn't Kratom be prescribed by a doctor?	Kratom functions as a supplement, much like the caffeine found in coffee, tea, soda, or chocolate, with mild effects. Natural botanicals used as supplements don't require a doctor's prescription; however, talking to your doctor about your supplement and vitamin regiment is an important part of routine health maintenance.
Hasn't Kratom been linked to numerous deaths?	There has not been a death solely attributed to Kratom.
There have been 660 calls to poison control about Kratom over a 6-year period — isn't it dangerous?	Poison control receives 3-4 million calls per year, making Kratom's average of 100 annual calls, many of which were to report mild side effects, an incredibly small percentage.
Isn't Kratom highly addictive?	No. With heavy daily use, one might become mildly dependent, just as someone may feel they need their daily cup of coffee.
Isn't Kratom an opioid?	No. Drugs like heroin, oxycodone, and other "classic" opioids are full opioid agonists, meaning they fully bind to and activate the brain's receptors. Kratom is a partial agonist, producing milder effects with low abuse potential. Evidence suggests that Kratom does not cause respiratory depression, which is the cause of death in opioid overdoses.
Isn't Kratom a synthetic drug?	No. Kratom is a natural product made from the leaves of the Kratom tree. As KTA's statement of principles outlines, only unadulterated, natural Kratom products are acceptable.

Follow Up

Be sure to send a follow up e-mail thanking the member for their time, reviewing your discussion, providing any supporting statistics with cited sources, and asking them to reach out if they have any questions. Feel free to attach a copy of your information packet as well.

We appreciate your commitment to keeping Kratom accessible to all those that choose natural wellness. If you have any questions, please e-mail info@KratomTrade.org.