

The 3 Ps: Delegating and Exercising Your Sovereign Responsibility Through the State Agents You Hire

Personal · Professional · Persistent — the Founders' Own Method for Governing Through Representatives

A documentary record drawn from the Federalist Papers, founding State declarations, Founders' writings, the Committees of Correspondence, presidential addresses, and Supreme Court opinions

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Executive Summary

Classes 1–4 established who the boss is, what the structure is, who preserves this structure, and hiring (electing) fiduciaries to represent and exercise our sovereign role and responsibility on our behalf. Class 5 answers the operational question: **how do we actually delegate our sovereign authority and responsibility** to preserve the structure that secures our rights? A principal who hires a trustee and then never instructs, never communicates, and never reviews their performance has not properly delegated their role — they have abdicated it. The Founders built specific constitutional channels for the ongoing direction of state agents by the sovereign people — petition, assembly, instruction, election, and the standing “censorial power” of public opinion — and the founding generation practiced a discipline of civil, useful, unrelenting engagement that this course reduces to the 3 Ps: **Personal, Professional, Persistent.**

The central question this brief answers: *How do we delegate and exercise our sovereign responsibility through the State agents we elect — what are the constitutional channels to do this, and what is the method that actually motivates and moves our state agents?* The answer proceeds from the constitutional design of delegation, through the channels the First Amendment and the founding State constitutional guarantees, to the three practices — each grounded in the Founders' own words and habits — and the founding-era institution that proved the method at scale: the Committees of Correspondence.

“Those who won our independence believed ... that public discussion is a political duty; and that this should be a fundamental principle of the American government. ... [T]he greatest menace to freedom is an inert people.”

Justice Louis Brandeis, concurring, *Whitney v. California*, 274 U.S. 357, 375 (1927).

I. Delegation Is the Design — Abdication Is the Failure Mode

The American republic is not direct democracy; it is government through representative agents, by design:

“[Representation serves] to refine and enlarge the public views, by passing them through the medium of a chosen body of citizens.”

James Madison, *Federalist No. 10* (1787).

“We may define a republic to be ... a government which derives all its powers directly or indirectly from the great body of the people, and is administered by persons holding their offices during pleasure, for a limited period, or during good behavior.”

James Madison, Federalist No. 39 (1788).

“Here, sir, the people govern; here they act by their immediate representatives.”

Alexander Hamilton, New York Ratifying Convention, June 21, 1788.

But delegation is a two-way discipline. In trust law, the principal who never instructs the trustee, never communicates their purposes, and never reviews an accounting by the agent has functionally abandoned the trust — and the courts will treat their silence as acquiescence. Just so in the republic: the sovereign people who vote once and vanish have not delegated their responsibility; they have surrendered it. Grover Cleveland stated the standing rule:

“Your every voter, as surely as your Chief Magistrate ... exercises a public trust.”

Grover Cleveland, First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1885.

And Madison located the ongoing supervisory power exactly where the 3 Ps operate:

“The censorial power is in the people over the Government, and not in the Government over the people.”

James Madison, Report of 1800; accord Madison, “Public Opinion” (1791): “Public opinion sets bounds to every government, and is the real sovereign in every free one.”

“The people are the only censors of their governors.”

Thomas Jefferson, Letter to Edward Carrington, January 16, 1787.

II. The Constitutional Channels of Delegation

The people’s direction of their agents is not a courtesy the government extends — it is a set of rights the Constitution guarantees and the founding State declarations made explicit:

Channel	Constitutional Guarantee	The 3 Ps in That Channel
Petition	First Amendment: “the right of the people ... to petition the Government for a redress of grievances”	Every note, call, email, and meeting with your State agents is the petition right in daily use
Assembly & Association	First Amendment: “the right of the people peaceably to assemble”; <i>De Jonge v. Oregon</i> (1937)	Town halls, caucuses, delegate rounds, Impact Councils — the choir, not just the voice
Instruction	Pennsylvania Const., Decl. of Rights, Art. XVI (1776): “The people have a right ... to instruct their representatives”; accord N.C. Decl. of Rights (1776)	The Professional ask: clear expectations, specific requests, measurable follow-through
Speech & Press	First Amendment; <i>Whitney v. California</i> (Brandeis, J.): “public discussion is a political duty”	Sharing, teaching, amplifying — setting Sam Adams’ brush fires
Election	Art. I § 2; Federalist No. 57 (“an habitual recollection of their dependence on the people”)	The periodic review — but only the beginning of supervision, never the whole of it

Lincoln named the force that flows through all five channels:

“In this age, in this country, public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed. Consequently he who moulds public sentiment goes deeper than he who enacts statutes or pronounces decisions.”

Abraham Lincoln, first debate with Stephen Douglas, Ottawa, Illinois, August 21, 1858.

III. The First P — PERSONAL: “Please” and “Thank You” Are the Magic Words

The **Personal** practice is basic diplomacy applied to your own public agents: connect with them as human beings — people with families, part-time pay, and full-time-plus workloads — not as targets for ridicule. In a world of ALL-CAPS emails and epithets, ordinary courtesy stands out like a beacon, and it was the founding generation’s explicit method:

“Tart Words make no Friends; a spoonful of Honey will catch more Flies than a Gallon of Vinegar.”

Benjamin Franklin, Poor Richard’s Almanack (1744).

“When the conduct of men is designed to be influenced, persuasion, kind, unassuming persuasion, should ever be adopted. ... If you would win a man to your cause, first convince him that you are his sincere friend.”

Abraham Lincoln, Temperance Address, February 22, 1842.

“When angry, count ten, before you speak; if very angry, an hundred.”

Thomas Jefferson, “A Decalogue of Canons,” 1825; accord his First Inaugural (1801): “Every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle.”

“Every action done in company ought to be with some sign of respect to those that are present.”

Rules of Civility & Decent Behaviour, Rule 1 — copied out by the young George Washington; accord Washington to Lord Stirling (1780): “Example, whether it be good or bad, has a powerful influence.”

The practice, in specifics: lead with gratitude — your agents almost never hear a genuine “Thank You”, and it lands like a jolt of energy. Always identify yourself as a **constituent** (name, address, district). Prefer the personal over the mass-produced: a handwritten note is pure gold precisely because it is rare. Assume your agent is a decent person doing a hard job — even when their politics differ from yours. You are not confronting an enemy; you are attempting to direct an employee, and the relationship you build is the channel every future request travels through. We teach people how to treat us by how we treat them.

IV. The Second P — PROFESSIONAL: “What Can I Do to Help YOU?”

The **Professional** practice is the most important of the three, and it turns the usual citizen posture inside out. The question is not “what have you done (or not done) *for me?*” but *“What am I doing to help you (my agent) be more successful at this difficult job I hired you to do for me?”* Nearly every State office is “part-time” — part-time pay, part-time staff, part-time resources — against so much more than full-time work. Your help comes in two forms of “currency”:

"Currency" of Political Influence	What It Looks Like
MONEY	Campaign and office costs are real: websites, newsletters, mailers, postcards, event venues, etc. all cost money a part-time state leader has no budget to cover typically. Modest, fully disclosed support is one of the most direct ways a Citizen Leader can sustain a faithful fiduciary. When you decide to contribute, do it regularly and in unusual amounts like \$5.13 every month, \$59.36 every quarter, \$598.04 every year... because these types of contributions will ALWAYS be remembered over the typical \$50 every election cycle, etc.
MANPOWER	Campaigns: signs, canvassing, cottage meetings, hosting events, etc. all take effort and time that a part-time state agent rarely has in abundance. In office: research, bill summaries, committee-hearing prep, one-pagers, drafting newsletters, organizing town halls. Most offices have almost no staff — your hours are leverage.

Align the help to the office: for your **Representative and Senator**, research help, hearing one-pagers, local coalition invitations; for your **Attorney General**, research supporting federalism litigation and potential amicus allies; for your **Governor**, public education, agency-oversight feedback, and interstate coordination leads. And share helpful tools: the [NFI Federalism Toolkit](#), [Federalism Index](#) and [Federalism Policy Tracker](#) (federalismindex.org) with a one-line note — "Saw this; thought it could help on [issue]". The founding-era rule for this practice:

"Well done is better than well said."

Benjamin Franklin, Poor Richard's Almanack (1737).

"To be good, and to do good, is all we have to do."

John Adams to Abigail Adams, March 17, 1777.

"The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena ... who strives valiantly."

Theodore Roosevelt, "Citizenship in a Republic," Sorbonne, April 23, 1910; accord his counsel: "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are."

*So before the next complaint about a State agent, the **Professional** question: when did I last offer money or manpower to help them do the very difficult job I hired them for?*

V. The Third P — PERSISTENT: P.U.S.H. — Persist Until Something Happens

Your agents juggle hundreds of issues and hundreds of emails a week — thousands in session — with little staff. One message, however good, disappears. The **Persistent** practice is the steady cadence that turns contact into relationship and relationship into influence: **five minutes, every week — one outreach, one follow-up, one share**. Follow up kindly ("Just checking whether my note on [X] reached you — happy to help with the legwork"), keep it respectful no matter what, and never mistake pestering for persistent: you are not nagging; you are governing. The founding generation ran on exactly this fuel:

"Perseverance and spirit have done wonders in all ages."

George Washington to Philip Schuyler, 1777.

“Courage and perseverance have a magical talisman, before which difficulties disappear and obstacles vanish into air.”

John Quincy Adams, Oration at Plymouth, 1802.

“I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer.”

Ulysses S. Grant, dispatch from Spotsylvania, May 11, 1864.

“It does not require a majority to prevail, but rather an irate, tireless minority keen to set brush fires of freedom in people’s minds.”

Samuel Adams — the tireless minority is a PERSISTENT minority.

And the standing warning against the alternative — the one-blast, ALL-CAPS approach: *“You don’t lead by hitting people over the head — that’s assault, not leadership”* (Dwight D. Eisenhower). *“Civility is not a sign of weakness”* (John F. Kennedy, Inaugural, 1961). Anger gets you deleted; cadence gets you a seat at the table.

VI. The Communications Ladder: What Actually Gets Through

The founding generation communicated by riding town to town and nailing notes to trees — and built a successful revolution doing it. You carry tools Jefferson, Paine and Franklin would have marveled at. Rank them by impact:

Rung	Method	Why It Works
1 • GOLD	Face-to-face: town halls, district office visits, caucuses, community events	You become a person, not an inbox entry. Nothing else builds the relationship faster.
2 • HIGH	Handwritten note	So rare it gets kept. Sixty seconds of effort reads as pure commitment.
3 • HIGH	Phone call · personal text (if invited)	Direct, human, brief. Always identify yourself as a constituent.
4 • SOLID	Personal email · direct message on social media	Effective when personalized — your words, your district, your address.
5 • STEADY	Public social media engagement: follow, comment, share	Keeps you visibly in their orbit between contacts; amplifies their good work (the Professional P in public).
6 • LOW	Form emails and petitions	White noise — hundreds of identical messages get skimmed and binned. If you must use one, rewrite it in your own words.

VII. The Founders’ Proof at Scale: Committees of Correspondence

The **3 Ps** are not a modern self-help scheme — they are how the Revolution was organized. In November 1772, Samuel Adams moved the creation of **the Boston Committee of Correspondence**: ordinary citizens, town by town, committed to a standing discipline of writing, sharing intelligence, coordinating positions, and keeping one another — and their colonial assemblies — informed and aligned. Within months, scores of Massachusetts towns had committees; within two years, the network

spanned the colonies and matured into the correspondence machinery that Madison later described as the constitutional design itself: “*A correspondence would be opened. Plans of resistance would be concerted. One spirit would animate and conduct the whole*” (Federalist 46). **Personal** (neighbors writing neighbors), **Professional** (useful intelligence, drafted resolutions, practical help to their assemblies), **Persistent** (standing committees, not one-time protests) — the **3 Ps**, at national scale, before the nation existed.

“Americans of all ages, all conditions, and all dispositions constantly form associations. ... Nothing, in my opinion, is more deserving of our attention than the intellectual and moral associations of America.”

Alexis de Tocqueville, *Democracy in America* (1835–40).

The modern descendant is the Impact Council: roughly **100 Citizen Leaders in every legislative district** (the **10×10 Initiative’s** math), dividing the work — research, media, events, agent relationships — and keeping the weekly cadence together. **One voice is heard; a choir is remembered.** Join or build yours through your State’s Impact Community at iGovern.us.

VIII. What Delegation Is NOT

- Not abdication: voting once every two years and vanishing is how the trust was lost. The cat’s-away rule governs: when the boss disappears, the enterprise drifts — every time.
- Not bludgeoning: ALL-CAPS emails, epithets, and profanity-laced voicemails teach your agent to ignore you — and worse, teach them that the engaged constituency is the unreasonable one. We teach people how to treat us by how we treat them.
- Not outsourcing to parties or pundits: the constitutional channels — petition, assembly, instruction — run from the constituent to the agent. No one can be Personal, Professional, or Persistent on your behalf.
- Not a spectator sport: “*Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it*” (Thomas Paine, *The American Crisis* No. 4, 1777).

IX. The Sovereign’s Playbook: Twelve Working Moves

The **3 Ps** become real in specific, repeatable moves. Here is the working playbook, from first contact to standing influence:

Move	How It’s Done	Which P
1. The first thank-you	Handwritten if possible; something specific (a vote, a town hall, their service); name, address, district	Personal
2. The constituent introduction	One paragraph: who you are, where you live, that you’re learning the constitutional structure — no ask at all the first time	Personal
3. The apology script	“I hired (elected) you for one of the most important jobs in America and never even introduced myself — I haven’t been acting like a very good boss.” (See the Bonus Deck scripts.)	Personal
4. The offer	“What can <u>I</u> do to help <u>you</u> be more successful at this job we hired you to do?” — then actually do the thing they name	Professional

5. The one-pager	Research a bill or issue into a single page: what it does, what it costs, where the constitutional line runs — staff-quality help from a constituent	Professional
6. The tool hand-off	Send the NFI Toolkit, Federalism Index / Policy Tracker link scoped to their committee: “Saw this — thought it could help on [issue]”	Professional
7. The public amplification	Share and praise their good work where their colleagues and constituents can see it — influence compounds in public	Professional
8. The committee appearance	Attend a hearing; sign in; give two minutes of respectful, informed testimony — few citizens ever do, so the few are remembered	Professional
9. The weekly follow-up	“Any updates on [issue]? Happy to help with the legwork.” Calendar it — same day, every week	Persistent
10. The caucus & delegate round	Show up where the hiring is actually decided; become a delegate; conduct the Class 4 job interview in person	Persistent
11. The contact map upkeep	Maintain current contacts for all five agents AND the rings around them — scheduler, chief of staff, district staff	Persistent
12. The recruitment	Teach one person the 3 Ps each month; build toward the 100-per-district Impact Council	Persistent

X. Case Studies: The 3 Ps in Action

1798–1800: The Method’s First Great Test

When Congress passed the Alien and Sedition Acts, the response ran exactly up the 3 Ps ladder: formal protest and public education (the Virginia and Kentucky Resolutions — Tool 1 of Class 3), correspondence among States and citizens, relentless press and pamphlet engagement — and then the review cycle: as Madison later recorded, “*the first elections that ensued put an end to them*” (Letter to Edward Everett, 1830). No violence, no despair — public sentiment was moulded, and the statutes fell. Lincoln’s maxim, demonstrated a half-century before he uttered it.

1772–1774: The Committees Prove the Cadence

The **Boston Committee of Correspondence** began as a town-meeting resolution and a writing discipline. Its genius was not any single letter but the **standing cadence** — regular, useful, coordinated communication that turned scattered towns into one informed body. When the crisis came, the network was already built. The lesson for the Impact Council: build the relationships and the rhythm before you need them.

2025: One Class Member’s Question Becomes State Law

The modern proof is in this course’s own history. In a Just Say KNOW class, a frustrated student asked why State leaders are never taught these principles — and was answered with the boss’s question: who do you think is responsible for training the people we hire? From that exchange came a letter to the Speaker of the Utah House invoking Utah Constitution Art. I, § 27 (“*frequent recurrence to fundamental principles*”), a request for continuing education for State leaders — and within months, Speaker Schultz commissioned the plan that became House Bill 488 (2025), the National Federalism Initiative: leader

education, an annual Summit of States, and a federalism commission. One Personal, Professional, Persistent constituent inquiry; one letter; one statute. The channels work.

XI. Objections Answered

"But ..."	The Answer
"I'm only one person."	So was Sam Adams in 1772. And the math runs your way: most State races are decided at caucuses and primaries where turnout is tiny. One hundred organized constituents per district — the Impact Council — effectively sets the standard for the seat. One voice is heard; a choir is remembered.
"They never respond."	They receive hundreds of messages weekly with almost no staff. That is an argument FOR the cadence, not against it: the weekly, friendly follow-up — and the relationship with the scheduler and staff — is precisely what separates you from the flood. P.U.S.H.
"I don't have time."	The method was engineered for five minutes a week — one outreach, one follow-up, one share. On the hard weeks, thirty seconds counts. What the boss cannot do is vanish.
"I hate politics."	So does this course. The 3 Ps are not partisan combat — they are structure maintenance: #StructureNOTPolitics. You are not joining a faction; you are supervising your employees.
"My agent is from the other party."	Jefferson: <i>"Every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle."</i> They are still YOUR agent, bound by the same oath to the same structure — and the constituent who shows up with courtesy and help earns influence no party label can block.
"Won't I just be pestering them?"	Pestering is volume without value. The 3 Ps are value with cadence: gratitude, useful help, respectful follow-up. Eisenhower drew the line: leadership, not assault.

XII. A Compendium of Voices, Mapped to the 3 Ps

P	Voice & Quote
PERSONAL	Franklin (1744): "a spoonful of Honey will catch more Flies than a Gallon of Vinegar" · Lincoln (1842): "kind, unassuming persuasion ... first convince him that you are his sincere friend" · Jefferson (1825): "When angry, count ten" · Washington's Rules of Civility, Rule 1 · Jefferson, First Inaugural (1801): "Every difference of opinion is not a difference of principle" · JFK, Inaugural (1961): "Civility is not a sign of weakness"
PROFESSIONAL	Franklin (1737): "Well done is better than well said" · John Adams (1777): "To be good, and to do good, is all we have to do" · Franklin (1751): "Resolve to perform what you ought; perform without fail what you resolve" · Theodore Roosevelt (1910): "The credit belongs to the man who is actually in the arena" · TR: "Do what you can, with what you have, where you are" · Wilson: "The ear of the leader must ring with the voices of the people"
PERSISTENT	Washington (1777): "Perseverance and spirit have done wonders in all ages" · John Quincy Adams (1802): "Courage and perseverance have a magical talisman" · Grant (1864): "I propose to fight it out on this line if it takes all summer" · Franklin: "Diligence is the mother of good luck"; "Lost time is never found again" · Jefferson: "Determine never to be idle" · Samuel Adams: the "irate, tireless minority"
THE FRAME	Madison, Federalist 10: representatives "refine and enlarge the public views" · Madison (1791): "Public opinion ... is the real sovereign" · Madison, Report of 1800: "The censorial power is in the people over the Government" · Lincoln (1858): "Public sentiment is everything" · Brandeis, Whitney (1927): "public"

	discussion is a political duty ... the greatest menace to freedom is an inert people” · FDR (1938): “The ultimate rulers of our democracy ... are the voters of this country” · Ford (1974): “Here the people rule”
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XIII. Six Settled Propositions

Proposition	Primary Authority
1. The republic is government through agents — and delegation without instruction, communication, and review is abdication	Federalist Nos. 10, 39, 57; Hamilton, N.Y. Ratifying Convention (1788); Cleveland (1885); trust-law principles of the principal’s duty
2. The Citizen Leader’s direction of his agents travels through guaranteed constitutional channels: petition, assembly, instruction, speech, and election	U.S. Const. amend. I; Pa. Decl. of Rights, Art. XVI (1776); N.C. Decl. of Rights (1776); De Jonge v. Oregon (1937)
3. Public discussion is a political DUTY — an inert people is freedom’s greatest menace	Whitney v. California (Brandeis, J., concurring) (1927); Madison, Report of 1800; Lincoln, Ottawa debate (1858)
4. The method that moves an agent is the Founders’ own: Personal civility, Professional usefulness, Persistent cadence	Franklin (1737, 1744); Lincoln, Temperance Address (1842); Washington (1777, 1780); J.Q. Adams (1802); Grant (1864)
5. The method scales through association — the Committees of Correspondence then, Impact Councils of 100 per district now	Boston Committee of Correspondence (1772); Madison, Federalist No. 46; Tocqueville (1835); the 10x10 Initiative
6. Five minutes a week, every week, is sufficient — the cadence, not the volume, is the power	Madison, Federalist No. 57 (“habitual recollection of their dependence on the people”); Samuel Adams (“tireless minority”); Paine (1777)

XIV. Conclusion: Liberty Is Not a Spectator Sport

When the cat’s away, the mice **WILL** play — and when the Citizen. Leader/sovereign disappears, the blessings of liberty fade, every time. But the reverse is equally true, and it is the promise of this whole course: the structure was engineered so that a “boss” who shows up — **Personally, Professionally, Persistently, for five minutes a week** — can direct the enterprise. Your four primary agents are waiting to hear from a constituent who says thank you, asks how to help, and comes back next week. Most never will. That is precisely why you, and a hundred like you in your district, will be impossible to ignore.

“Public sentiment is everything. With public sentiment, nothing can fail; without it, nothing can succeed.”

Abraham Lincoln (1858)

“The greatest menace to freedom is an inert people.”

Justice Louis Brandeis, Whitney v. California (1927)

“Those who expect to reap the blessings of freedom, must, like men, undergo the fatigues of supporting it.”

Thomas Paine, The American Crisis No. 4 (1777)