

The Four Phases of Voter Contact

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Voter Identification

Early on we identify voters, so we don't waste time contacting people we can't or don't need to persuade during the persuasion phase. We use a database so that every year we have more and better information and can better identify their issues and leanings. Voter identification calls are usually scripted and it is important to ask all the questions you are asked to. Say hello, identify yourself as a volunteer and begin asking questions -do not ask if you can have a moment of their time -it's too easy for them to say no. They'll let you know if they do not want to talk -in this case, thank them for their time and say goodbye.

Persuasion

We find out what voters care about, frame the issues in our values and try to pull them to our side. Persuading voters is effective if you know how to do it. Draw out issues from the voter, listen to what they say, use this info to frame your answers and always speak from our values. Not everyone is effective at or comfortable with persuasion. If that's you, that's OK; volunteer for Voter identification or GOTV.

GOTV -Get Out The Vote!

GOTV is done in the week, days and hours before the polls close on Election Day. Contacting voters to remind them to vote is much more effective at this time than persuasion: high voter turnout benefits Democrats! This is the reason Republicans have enacted voter suppression laws and perform dirty tricks to depress voter turnout and prevent people from voting. (What does it say about a party that is so terrified of voters they don't want them to vote!?) The goal here is to contact as many people as you possibly can, giving them the date of election day or early voting info, poll opening and closing times and polling location (this info will be provided to you on your call or walk sheets.) You may also ask them if they need a ride to the polls. During GOTV we go for quantity not quality so we don't spend this time persuading.

Voter Engagement

This is a long term process -contacting voters *between* elections. Everyone can do this. Presumably your friends and family like you and may even look up to you and respect you for your political knowledge. Talking about our values in relation to issues *will* sink in.

Precinct chairs in particular, if they are doing their jobs, are in touch with Dems and leaning Dems in their neighborhoods attempting to provide issue education and asking them to join the progressive community. Low stress events like picnics or community forums with issue experts and legislators or candidates draw people in, reinforce our values and build a base of people who will likely say yes when you ask them to help in the next election cycle.