



Canvass “How to” & “Dos and Don’ts”

How to Canvass Effectively: With training and a little practice you’ll be a pro in no time!

- **Understand who you are talking to:** Every name on the list is a **registered voter**. Most do not vote regularly, but some are newly registered. Many may be undecided – it’s your job to persuade them to vote!
- **Know Your Message:** Before going out, review the script so that you know what you will be saying. You don’t have to read it word for word you – in fact, you shouldn’t be reading it. But practice until you feel comfortable with the main facts.
- **Know how the list is organized.** Study your map and walk sheet. The lists are organized so that if you follow the order of the pages it will take you down one side of the street, from building to building and then back up the other side of the street. Following the order of the sheets will help you stay organized and make the canvass more efficient.
- **Check out with your coordinator.** Make sure that you have your coordinator’s contact information and that they have yours so that you can stay in touch as the canvass progresses.
- **Knocking the door:** Always knock twice, leaving time for the voter to come to the door, AND TAKE TWO STEPS BACK - DON’T BE IN SOMEONES FACE. If no one is home, leave a piece of literature and move onto the next one. **DO NOT put the literature in the person’s mailbox. It is illegal to place any non-mailed items in a mailbox**
- **Remember** that you are representing the NAACP and how you act reflects directly on him, so **always be polite, energized and positive**. If you do reach someone who is strongly supporting another candidate, do not try and engage them in debate, code who they are supporting and then politely thank them for their time and move on.
- **Coding the lists correctly.** The only way we’ll be able to act on our data come Election Day is if we know who they are. So be sure to mark your sheets correctly. Do it after every door – it’s easy to forget who said what later on. Refer to the canvass cheat sheet or ask your canvass captain if you have any questions on coding.
- **Hit every door in the packet.** It is critical that you knock every door in your packet. These are the voters that will decide this election!
- **TURN IN THE LISTS!!!** Do not take lists home, even if they are incomplete. Turn in what you did with a completed tally sheet to your coordinator.

DOS AND DON'TS:

Do	Don't
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Be polite & respectful	DON'T be rude or disrespectful, even if you encounter rude and disrespectful people.
Answer the voter's questions and offer to get back to them if you don't know the answer.	DON'T argue with voters. If they don't like what you're pitching, cut it short and move on
Ask for an email address so we can keep in touch!	DON'T give wrong information. If you don't know the answer to a question, offer to get back to the voter
	DON'T knock on doors that are not on your voter list

DON'T leave any information in mailboxes.

Proper Volunteer Training

Before They Arrive

Be Prepared

When did Noah build the Ark? Before the flood! Cut lists and have them ready in walk or call packets well beforehand. This includes any scripts, maps, directions, etc. It is absolutely unacceptable to be unprepared for your volunteers.

Know who you are Expecting

Have your volunteers sign in as they enter (with a space on the sign-in sheet to schedule another shift, of course). This way you'll have a record of who came. If anyone hasn't shown up, call them approx. 15 minutes after their shift starts. If they can't make it that day, confirm them on the spot for another shift.

Maintain a Fun and Pleasant Office Environment

Think of your office as any other place of business. If it isn't clean and the staff isn't organized and friendly, volunteers are likely to take their valuable time elsewhere. Make sure your volunteer space is clean before your volunteers arrive and that there are posters and snacks to make them know that they are appreciated.

Greet Your Volunteers and Thank Them

As they come in, set them up right away. In general, no one should walk in your office without being greeted. No matter what else is going on in your day, everyone should be greeted with a smile and a positive attitude. Your enthusiasm will be infectious.

Training

Value Your Volunteers

Tell them how excited you are to have them and how important their job is. The best way to make a volunteer feel valued is by preparing for their arrival and training them properly.

Explain the Universe and what the Expectations are for the Calls

“You are calling voters today who usually do not vote every cycle. It is critical to turnout each and everyone of the individuals in this election cycle. This is why the work that you are doing is so important to elect our candidates. You could encounter about a 5-7% wrong number rate, do not be discouraged as you are doing a very important list clean up so our staff and volunteers are not still calling these numbers in the critical 1-2 months before the election.”

Go through the Script

Provide them with a list of DO's and DON'Ts. Make sure to cover common first time pitfalls: DO ask supporters to volunteer. DON'T write notes on the sheet instead of using the codes.

Give them a Goal

To new volunteers: “Most people make about 80 calls in a shift. To returning volunteers: “Last time you made 80 calls. This time can you go for 90?”

Role-play

Go over the script with your vol or make some sample calls for them to see. Make Calls with a First Time Volunteer First time volunteers are generally nervous, so you should make a couple calls with them.

Ask for and Answer Questions

Thank Them

Again and again and again and again. Offer them water and snacks. Let them know where the bathroom is. Make sure they know how much you appreciate them. Pay the volunteer with kindness and appreciation.

Check in and Converse with Them

(Phonebanking) Check in with your volunteer after 10 minutes and every 1/2 hour after that. Thank them every time and ask how the calls are going. Casually listen in on calls

and see if there is something you can encourage or that needs to be nipped in the bud. Ensure that the volunteer is coding the responses appropriately.

Debrief

When their shift is over, ask how the calls went and if any issues came up that you should know about. Ask if there were any particular calls you need to know about (someone who wants to volunteer or wants to vote by mail.)

[INSERT VIDEO OF ENTERING LIST NUMBER]