

# How to Canvass - Best Practices

## Overview

Thank you for volunteering to knock on some doors. This is your opportunity to take your positive message directly to your neighbors. It is a strong way to counteract all the misinformation that goes out through the media. You can make a difference. You can influence people and the election.

## Goals

There are several goals for today. First, create a positive contact with a potential or past voter. Use proven persuasion techniques to influence them. Second, engage voters by asking several questions about the candidate and then taking some notes (for use by the campaign). Remember, this contact means they are more likely to vote for our candidate.

Tip	Comment(s)
Use Your Time Wisely	The range of time per contact will probably be between 2-5 minutes. If you talk longer with one person, the turf will take longer, and you may reach fewer people.
Walking the Route Effectively to Save Time	The VAN sheets are organized alphabetically by street names. This is probably not the shortest route through the turf. Before going out, assess the turf to determine the shortest route to save time. Consult maps at the office or on your phone.
Walk on Sidewalks or Driveways	Stay off of people's lawn's or out of their flower beds. Don't annoy people by walking across lawns or flower beds. Don't touch cars or trucks.
Ring the Door Bell Only 1-2 times.	Ring the DOOR bell versus knocking. (door bells are more likely to be heard). Ring once and wait 20-30 seconds before a second ring. If no one answers the door, leave the literature and move on.
Wait Patiently for The Voter at the Door	After you ring the bell, use your peripheral vision to notice if someone is coming to the door. Don't stare into the house. If no one answers, leave literature and go after 1 minute.
Initial Contact (First 10 seconds)	Give a big smile and say hi. General script: "Hi, my name is fill in the blank. I'm a volunteer and I'm contacting you and your neighbors about the upcoming election." Continue with the rest of the script. Develop your own style.
Thank Supporters	Always acknowledge voters who support our candidate(s). Say thank you with gusto.
Leave Literature So It Is Visible	If no one is home, put literature in the door handle or in the crack between the door and frame. Many times, it is better to stick the literature between the garage door and weather stripping. It is okay to leave it under a corner of a welcome mat, or behind a mailbox. It's illegal for anyone but a postal worker to put material in a mailbox, so please do not put literature in mailboxes.
Leave Pets Alone	Ignore all pets-dogs, cats, birds, etc. If the pet goes out the door, you could be blamed for the escape. Complement owners about their pets, but don't touch them.
Return Turf Sheet Promptly	Make notes after each contact. Review your notes after the turf. You may be asked to tally your contacts. Return them promptly to the staging location (or office). Contact notes will be recorded in the VAN. Turf sheets may be used a second or third time. Make sure you understand the coding system. (See reverse side)

## Potential Opportunity

<b>Opportunity 1:</b> I'd like to get active.	<i>Your response:</i> That's great. Most activities are 2-3 hours. We provide training for interested volunteers. We'd love to have you be a part of our campaign. Let me confirm your name and get your email address and telephone. Someone will get back to you in 2-3 days.
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**Potential Challenges**

<b>Challenge 1:</b> I don't trust (candidate's name).	<i>Your reflective response:</i> "It seems like you are unsure about _____. I'd like to remind you that _____. I've done my own research and trust _____ (candidate)."
<b>Challenge 2:</b> Grumpy Person	<i>Your reflective response:</i> "Okay. I want to thank you for your time." Leave literature (if possible) and move on. Record your note. Usually there are only 1 or 2 grumpy people out of a turf of 30 houses. Don't get discouraged. Most turfs do not have grumpy people.
<b>Challenge 3:</b> Let's debate the issues.	Avoid debating issues. You usually will not change their mind. Gracefully avoid (or back out) of these situations. This is not a good use of your time. Move on.

**Coding Turf Sheets (This may change for different elections)**

<b>Code</b>	<b>Definition</b>	<b>Comment</b>
NH	Not Home	Assumes you left literature.
RF	Refused	Assumes you talked to someone.
MV	Moved	The voter is no longer at this address.
SP	Spanish Speaker	Assumes you left literature. Assumes you talked to someone.
OT	Other Language	Not an English or Spanish speaker. Assumes you left literature. Assumes you talked to someone.
IA	Inaccessible Location	Couldn't get to the address to talk to anyone or leave literature. This usually means apartment complexes.
DE	Deceased	Voter died. Inquire if others support Democrats and are registered to vote.
VA	Vacant	Voter no longer lives at the address. Inquire if new residents support Democrats and are registered to vote.

**Voter Registration Update**

For the latest in voter registration information, refer people to <https://myvote.wi.gov/en-us/>. You can find a treasure trove of information. All up to date.

**Absentee (Early) Voting**

Remind folks that they can vote before election day with an absentee ballot. This is also called "early voting." Each city, village and town is different. Check with the local clerk for the latest information.

**Rides to the Polls**

If anyone needs a ride to the polls in \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, or \_\_\_\_\_ they can call \_\_\_\_\_ at Area Code- \_\_\_\_\_ . This group (person) is providing free rides on election day.

**Questions?**

If you have questions or run into problems, please don't hesitate to contact the office at \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_ - \_\_\_\_\_.

**To volunteers:** Again, **thank you** so much for your help today! We appreciate your contribution! You'll benefit by knowing you did "your part" to build a better community!