

Point of Entry: Canvassing

Making 1st Contact

- What is a point of entry?
- Canvassing
- Role play



Point of Entry

- Point of Entry simply means the place where the campaign made first contact with a person. The point at which they entered.
- For an old fashioned labor campaign, this might be a factory gate
- Organizations now can have multiple points of entry – churches, high schools, neighborhoods (door knocking), employers, friends.



The Importance of choosing Points of Entry

- Carefully choosing points of entry is critical for an organization.
- With limited resources it is important to be selective about where you want to spend your time and analyze the perceived benefits of one point of entry vs. another.

Things to consider

- Is it likely that this place will have people who are interested in the campaign?
- How long will it take to make contact with these people? What is the work involved?
- How likely is it that these people will get involved and remain involved?

Most important...

MOS

Is it working?

What works?

What doesn't work?

What haven't you tried?

**If at first you don't succeed,
try try again.**

Canvassing



What is Canvassing?

- Canvassing is:
 - Going door-to-door to evaluate, inform, educate, and motivate people about a specific issue (i.e. Healthcare is a human Right Campaign)



Why is Canvassing Important?

- Canvassing is important because:

Face-to-face communication is the most effective campaign tool.



What do you need to canvass?

- **Supplies**
 - **Where am I going?**
 - Lists
 - Maps
 - Vehicles
 - **Comfort**
 - Comfortable shoes
 - Water
 - Folders
 - Clipboards
 - Pens
 - Weather-appropriate clothing

When/where should I go canvassing?

- Canvass where it makes sense.
- Rural canvassing is very time consuming, but often more effective than urban canvassing.
- Most people work. Plan for that.

What do I do at the door?

Knock, ring, and smile!

You want them to know you are there, and that you are friendly.

Introduce yourself and the Healthcare Campaign.

Have a script.

Know what you are going to say.

Do not read from the script!

No one likes to hear a robot at the door.

Have a conversation.

Talk with the person.

Do not “talk at” the person.

Keep eye contact

Use friendly body language

Always end the conversation on a positive note.



Body Language is Important

Before the door is opened, take a step backwards

so that the household member does not think we are trying to enter their home.

Be relaxed and friendly

so they relax

Be confident and get straight to the point

So they give you the time of day. You are stealing their time for a reason. The reason is worth their time, and they must know that instantly.

Try to be at eye level with the person

If the person is sitting on the steps, either step back, or sit down on the steps also. Height carries a power-dynamic you want to tilt in their favor.

**Use your props
Your clipboard
Any literature you have**

Give the person your clipboard to sign. This makes it that much easier to sign, gives them immediate info on what you are there for, and breaks up what can be perceived as aggressive space between you.

The Backbone of Your Script

- Listen
- Connect
- Agitate
- Ask

Listen

- who is this story and what is their story? (The survey is a tool to get them to talk about this)

Connect

- how is their story connected to ours? (as you are telling them about the healthcare is a human right campaign, and helping them fill out the survey, you are looking for their story and what might get

this section on how we've created

Agitate

- what about their story
can we use to make them
angry enough to join the
campaign?

Ask

- now they are agitated, here is what they can do:
come to a chapter meeting, or a speakout or a movie night...

What to say

- who you are
- why you are canvassing and the purpose of your campaign
- how things are (bad)
- how things should be (good)
- how this will be achieved
- here's how you can help

Most importantly

- There is an organization (the Healthcare is a Human Right MD campaign) that
 - understands the issue
 - has the necessary competence to resolve the issue
 - And you should Join!
 - Here's how.

What do I do at the door?

Sample Script:

“Hi, my name is Ben and I am member of the Healthcare is a Human Right MD Campaign.”

Explain the Healthcare is a Human Right Campaign and what we are trying to accomplish and why (in three sentences).

“We are doing a survey today, do you have few minutes?”

Give them some literature/flyer for next meeting. Talk about what it says.

(Have them sign the survey)

“Thanks for your time, have a great day.”

- Conversations should generally be no longer than 5 minutes.
 - You have lots of doors to get through so try not to get bogged down.
 - You are looking for people who you'll have that longer conversation with. But save that longer conversation for your follow-up visit.
- Stay safe.
 - If a situation is unsafe, i.e. big dog, scary house, skip that house.

You are looking for people to go back to



- Record:

- Anyone who was interested

- Anyone who seemed like they could do something for the campaign

- Anyone who has a good story

- Anyone who has resources and is interested

- Record homes where no one was home so you can go back.

- If someone was rude or adamantly against your cause, record where they lived so you don't go back there.

- Calculate how long 10 houses should take, and keep track of your time.
- Plan on getting a good lead in one out of ten houses.
- Plan on rejection in maybe 4-5 out of ten
- These numbers will be different in different neighborhoods.
- Focus on the positive interactions and keep it moving.

Potential Difficulties

What should you do if the person who opens the door is clearly busy/irritated, etc.?:

- Don't focus on, or take it personally.
- present your proposal briefly and effectively
- Focus on winning support.
- hand over a leaflet.
- **Move on quickly.**



Canvassing is for finding the people who already agree with us, so don't spend time debating people on the other side!

LONG CONVERSATIONS:

Expect to spend 3-5 minutes to each person.

Two reasons you might exceed this:

1. The person is really into what we are doing:

GREAT! At this point, say:

I would very much like to speak with you further but I have two visit 30 other people today. MAKE SURE TO GET THIS PERSON'S CONTACT INFORMATION.

Then ask when you can speak with the person further about this, and ask them to come to the next chapter meeting.

2.

The person is a blabbermouth and might be crazy.

Do the same thing as above. You can always follow up with people you think will be helpful to the campaign and cancel appointments with people you think won't. With these people, you can simply point out the contact information on the leaflet, thank the person and move on.

Tips!

- Rattle gates! (The more the better!)
- Drink water. Eat.
- Comfy shoes.
- Know where you are going.
- No more than 5 min/door.
- **RECORD EVERYTHING!**
- If nobody is home, leave literature at the door, not at the mailbox.