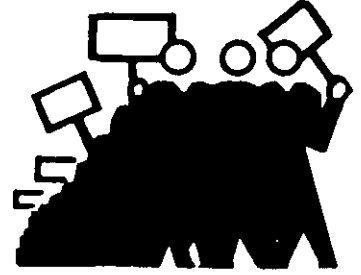


9. Volunteers



Getting people to volunteer for your campaign requires one thing above all others—you must ask them. The overwhelming majority of all campaign workers volunteer because they were asked at some point. The volunteer recruitment process can be separated into four parts: identifying your volunteer needs, planning to fulfill those needs, managing the volunteer program, and evaluating the volunteer program.

Identifying Volunteer Needs

Before starting to recruit volunteers, ask yourself what activities or programs will require volunteer help. In some campaigns almost every task is performed by volunteers. The following is a list of tasks that can be done by volunteers.

- **Fund raising.** Have volunteers hold fund raising events in their homes, and have them help plan and staff other fund raising events. Volunteers can make up your finance committee and do research to target prospective donors. Volunteers can contribute financially to campaigns—ask them to contribute both time and money if it is within their means.

- **Press and media.** Volunteers are often the subjects of stories in weekly papers. (“Sally Jones of Avon, CT was appointed coordinator of the Smith for Congress campaign.”)

Volunteers can monitor the television and radio coverage that the candidate and his or her opponent are getting. Volunteers can also clip articles from weekly papers that focus on the candidate and his or her opponent, local issues that the candidate should know before going into the area, or schedules of events that the candidate might want to attend.

Volunteers are also important when there is going to be a call-in radio or television talk show, and volunteers can write letters to newspaper editors.

- **Scheduling.** Volunteers should be used at local public events (a country fair or ethnic festival) to let the crowd know the candidate is there, and to introduce the candidate to individuals in the crowd.

Volunteers can insure a good turnout for a large crowd event by selling tickets over the phone or by inviting other volunteers to attend.

Volunteers may be used before an event to distribute fliers at shopping centers or athletic events to let voters know that the event is going to take place.

- **Staffing campaign headquarters.** A central group of volunteers working in the main campaign office can perform the following tasks: answering phones; calling other volunteers to fill up a regular schedule for office coverage; addressing or stuffing envelopes; clipping newspapers; and making regular pick-ups and deliveries. Volunteers can also work at events scheduled out of the main office, in such jobs as passing out information, registering people at the door of the event, collecting checks, acting as bartenders or waitresses, and making food for events or the office.

- **Polling (In-House).** Volunteers (such as college professors) can design your poll; other volunteers can do the actual polling.

- **Field operations.** For voter contact programs, volunteers can operate phone banks, distribute literature, and conduct foot canvasses. Volunteers can also follow up with undecideds found through phone and foot canvasses by sending them pieces of mail. Volunteers can put up lawn signs or posters.

- **Get-out-the-vote.** Volunteers can telephone voters or go door-to-door on election day to get people out to vote. Volunteers can also drive cars or vans to pick up voters in need of transportation.

During the planning stages of the campaign, decide which of the previous activities will be carried out, how much time each activity will require, and how many volunteers each campaign program will need. With these volunteer needs in mind, set volunteer recruitment goals to accommodate your program goal needs.

Fulfilling Volunteer Needs

A campaign's recruitment program should begin with a meeting of the candidate, the campaign manager, and the candidate's friends and advisors. The purpose of this meeting is to develop an extensive list of potential volunteers for your campaign. Names and resources for this list should include: friends



Volunteers

and friends of friends; workers in past Democratic campaigns; students of high schools, colleges, and universities; senior citizens and retirees' groups; minority and ethnic groups; issue-oriented groups (e.g., the Sierra Club, Common Cause, ERA committee); labor union members and families; civic groups, clubs, and associations; and professional organizations.

After identifying prospective volunteers, individuals, or groups, make specific recruiting assignments. The assignments should fall into three classes.

- Group 1. Individuals to be recruited by the core group (candidate, campaign manager, and friends and advisors to the campaign). Each member of the core group should be assigned to recruit individuals he or she knows best.

- Group 2. To acquire membership lists from interest, issue, ethnic, or other groups, find out who in the core group has a personal contact with an office or group with a list of interest to the campaign. That core group member should be assigned to use his or her personal contact to acquire the group's membership list.

- Group 3. Individuals and groups on the list of potential volunteers who do not fall into group 1 or 2 should be assigned to the volunteer chairman for recruitment.

The basic message here is that everyone in the core group should get an assignment, including the campaign manager and the candidate. There is an important psychological reason for this sharing of duties: It improves the internal working of the campaign. If strong volunteer support is worth having, recruiting volunteers should involve everyone. Too often the importance of volunteer recruitment is forgotten by campaign managers. Of course, once campaign programs are underway, the volunteer coordinator will run the volunteer operation on a day-to-day basis. But everyone in the campaign should take part in getting the volunteer recruitment off the ground.

Recruiting Volunteers

Each person involved in recruiting volunteers should use the same basic message. A consistent message is an effective message. Your recruitment message should include:

- Information about the candidate and the campaign: who the candidate is and what his or her background includes, the issues of the election, and the candidate's views.

- Information about what volunteers will be doing, a general description of campaign programs and activities, and a word or two about the importance of volunteers to the campaign.

- A specific time request. In order to get a schedule commitment from the volunteer, first ask which days and times are best. Then try to get a commitment for as much time as you can.

A careful recruitment message will provide the prospective volunteer with reasons for agreeing to help. It will also get across the feeling that the campaign is organized, that everyone knows what they're doing.

Managing a Volunteer Program

The management of the volunteer program should be well planned and organized. Each volunteer activity should have specific goals and guidelines, set well before the activities are scheduled to begin. A well-planned volunteer program will not only attract more volunteers, but it will also have a more positive result for the campaign.

It is essential to assign responsibility for the volunteer program to one individual. This person should be called the volunteer coordinator.

The volunteer coordinator is responsible for recruitment and management of volunteers. He or she should work full time and should not be primarily responsible for the development of the programs volunteers will work on.

If your campaign is going to recruit volunteers to work both at campaign headquarters and at home, it is a good idea to assign one or two assistants to help the coordinator with the management responsibilities. The assistants can manage the campaign's ongoing recruitment program.

The volunteer coordinator must provide enough volunteers to ensure that all campaign programs run smoothly. To keep volunteers happy, the coordinator should pay attention to these five considerations.

- Good working conditions. Headquarters should be a pleasant place to work. Fringe benefits such as refreshments should be provided.

- A clear and manageable job assignment for each volunteer. Job assignments must be specific: make so many phone calls, write so many letters, visit so many houses. Job assignments must also fit the skills or abilities of the volunteer, who must be able to see his or her way through to completing each task.

- Instructions and training. Volunteers must understand exactly what they are supposed to do. Instructions should be written for each major volunteer activity. Training sessions should also be held to make sure everyone understands the activity and to answer all questions.

- Progress reports. Progress reports should be linked to specific goals and deadlines. The volunteer needs to know exactly what he or she is to do, by when, and how to report on his or her progress.

- Recognition. The volunteer should be recognized for showing up, for working, and for finishing his or her work. Saying thank you is one way; there are many others. The coordinator and his or her assistants are responsible for satisfying this volunteer need.

In addition to the preceding suggestions for sustaining a successful volunteer program, you must always make sure that volunteers' morale is high. Here are some suggestions to keep volunteers interested in the campaign.

- The first training session sets the tone for the entire campaign and gives the volunteers an idea of how things are going to be run. Prepare for the first day by practicing your orientation and training session. This will help remove any kinks in



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your program and will make the first day run smoothly.

- Combine the initial volunteer training session with a campaign kick-off party. This creates a good atmosphere and combines work with pleasure. Make sure the candidate and top campaign personnel attend these parties. You want volunteers to feel that they are an integral part of the campaign. Campaign staff should express appreciation to the volunteers throughout the campaign, not just at the end.

- Wall charts are good devices for recording progress toward a goal. Volunteer teams or shifts can see their progress as they go. This spurs activity and provides a form of recognition.

- To ensure that volunteers feel they are an integral part of the campaign, schedule periodic briefings on campaign strategies and activities for the volunteer staff. The purpose of these briefings is to give the volunteers an idea of how their work is helping the campaign and to encourage them to continue giving their time and support to the campaign.

Evaluating a Volunteer Program

Evaluating the effectiveness and efficiency of your volunteer recruitment programs must be an ongoing part of your cam-

paign. By continually monitoring your volunteer recruitment programs you can determine if your recruitment goals are being met and, if not, what changes need to be made to meet the original program goals.

There are several simple ways to evaluate your volunteer recruitment program. The first is to monitor the number of people who respond to the recruitment program. The second is to keep daily records of the number of volunteers who are working, and the third is to keep progress reports of all assignments. The following is a list of evaluation tools you can use.

- The pledge card. This card gives the coordinator two pieces of information: how many volunteers have been recruited and if the recruitment program is effective.

- The work record. This short form can be put on the back side of the pledge card. It is used to keep a record of volunteer attendance or work progress. If there is a sharp drop in volunteer attendance or work progress it can be assumed that the needs of volunteers are not being met.

- The sign in/sign out sheets. This form keeps track of how many volunteers are working each day. It is also a good way to keep track of how many volunteers you are retaining through the campaign.

10. Get Out the Vote



Getting out the vote used to be the stock and trade of every Democratic organization, but in most areas Democratic candidates can no longer depend on precinct organizations to pull their voters to the polls. Today it is the candidate's campaign responsibility to encourage voters to leave their homes and go to the polls.

This chapter will show you how to put together an efficient, effective get-out-the-vote (GOTV) program. Different GOTV techniques will be critiqued and three sample GOTV programs will be discussed. First, however, there are a few basic principles of GOTV that you should understand.

- The goal of get-out-the-vote programs is to get more of *your* voters to the polls.

- GOTV is not simply a one day program. The payoff for get-out-the-vote programs occurs on election day, but planning and preparation must begin at least four weeks before the payoff. Additionally, the execution of an effective GOTV program plan usually begins the Friday before election day.

- While a strong GOTV program is always important to the success of a campaign, it is even more important for Democrats in non-presidential election years when the turnout is traditionally low.

- GOTV programs should reach a very special target group of voters or precincts (see targeting chapter). You do not need to assemble a get-out-the-vote operation in every precinct. Focus your entire effort on a select group of voters or precincts—for instance, favorable voters in low turnout precincts.

- GOTV is a very selective operation. The program must use one-on-one voter contact tools to pull voters to the polls. It depends, therefore, on organized one-on-one campaigning.

- The GOTV message is very simple. You ask, cajole, and encourage your voters to go to the polls. In addition to reminding and motivating your voters, the get-out-the-vote message should impart vital election day information to voters, such as when the polls open and where the polls are located.

- Some GOTV programs do more than motivate target votes and deliver vital election information. They also provide voters with transportation to the polls and absentee ballots.

There are ten steps to a good GOTV program.

1. Appoint a get-out-the-vote director.
2. Research election laws.
3. Target precincts for GOTV efforts.
4. Group get-out-the-vote target precincts by geographical location.
5. Survey GOTV target areas.
6. Assess GOTV resources.
7. Design GOTV programs according to available resources.
8. Work out logistical problems.
9. Evaluate and reassess the overall GOTV program.
10. Execute programs.

The GOTV Director

A GOTV director should be appointed at least a month before election day. Your GOTV director should work full time and have no other assignments. He or she must have a good knowledge of what has transpired during the campaign and know the politics and geography of the district. The GOTV director will also need volunteer and staff support. As election day draws nearer, more and more staff and volunteers should be transferred to GOTV activities.

The GOTV director's first job is to research and understand election laws. After researching election laws, the director or staff and volunteers must find out how election laws are administered locally.

The director must be conversant with election law and the local administration of the law in these five areas:

- Poll watchers.* The GOTV director should know the laws regulating poll watchers. He or she should know who is eligible to be a poll watcher, how watchers are appointed, and the appropriate filing deadlines and credentials for each poll watcher.

- Checkers and greeters.* In some precincts, you may want to use checkers (volunteers who keep track of who has voted) or greeters (volunteers who distribute leaflets or sample ballots).



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Election laws govern the conduct of these workers. For example, the law will state the physical distance from polls that greeters must stand, or determine where inside polling places checkers can stand.

•*Absentee ballots.* In most jurisdictions, absentee voting is a two-step process. First, an application must be obtained and returned. Then a ballot is sent to the voter, who returns the ballot to the election board. Because local authorities interpret election laws differently, it is essential to know how each county administers absentee ballot programs. In some counties, it may be necessary to have a notary public sign each ballot, while it may be possible to obtain ballot application forms in bulk and distribute them to appropriate voters in other areas.

•*Polling places and precincts.* Find out if any changes are planned in precinct boundaries or in the location of polling places. Make sure you know exactly where each precinct votes.

•*Time off for voting.* Many states require employers to give employees time off to vote. After election law research has been completed, the GOTV director should prepare a memorandum for all staff members explaining this and other pertinent parts of the law.

Targeting GOTV Precincts

Targeting for GOTV enables you to select certain voters and/or precincts for GOTV work. Remember, you cannot get everyone to the polls—nor do you want to. You want to pull Democratic or favorable voters who are least likely to vote without your intervention to the polls. Targeting pinpoints these voters.

There are two possible targets for GOTV, precincts and voters. The GOTV director can target precincts, voters, or a combination of precincts and voters.

Target precincts can be identified by analyzing past election returns. Look for precincts with high concentrations of Democrats in which voter turnout is low (see targeting chapter).

Target voters can be identified through voter contact activities. These voters are individuals who have been identified—by name, address, and phone number—as favorable to the candidate.

Targeting Precincts

If the campaign has not carried out voter identification activities and, therefore, does not know which individual voters favor the candidate, the GOTV program must rely on precinct targeting. This means you must deal with every Democratic voting household in your target precincts. (Polling information can also be used to help choose GOTV precincts.)

Once the GOTV precincts have been identified and ranked in priority order, take a precinct map and color in the top priority precincts. This map will give you a graphic geographical picture of where your GOTV potential lies.

Targeting Voters

If you have identified favorable voters who live in low turnout districts, you should target such voters for GOTV. This will enable you to contact the favorables who are least likely to vote. Contact favorable voters who live in priority target precincts first.

Targeting both Precincts and Target Voters

Most campaigns target both voters and precincts for get-out-the-vote. GOTV targets would include favorable voters where they have been identified, and all Democratic voters in target precincts where individual supporters have not been identified.

Dividing GOTV Target Precincts

Using the color-coded precinct map, group target precincts into GOTV areas. These areas should be logical subdivisions of your district. The most important factor to consider when dividing the district into GOTV areas are geography and numbers of voters. Make sure the total number of target voters in each area is manageable. Note any precincts with high concentrations of low income or elderly people. The voters in these precincts usually need the most assistance on election day including anything from babysitting to transportation.

Surveying GOTV Target Areas

Survey each GOTV target area. Where are the major traffic intersections? What are the traffic conditions like? Are there any major mass transit stops? Are there shopping centers or other areas where people congregate, or large factories located in or near the district where volunteers could distribute literature at plant gates? Can the district be foot canvassed? Where are the polling places located, where can greeters stand, and are some polling places cut off from part of their precinct by physical boundaries like train tracks or busy highways?

Assessing GOTV Resources

At this point you must make a preliminary assessment of the resources you can deploy to reach target voters in GOTV precincts. Questions to answer include:

- How many volunteers will you be able to put in each GOTV area, and where will they work?
- Will the Democratic organization be doing any GOTV work in these precincts? If so, what will they do?
- How many telephones do you have that can reach target areas? Where are they located?
- Are there any good places for locating GOTV area headquarters? How much would it cost to open additional headquarters for GOTV?
- How many cars will be available?
- What is your total GOTV budget?



Designing GOTV Programs

The geography of your GOTV areas, your budget, your volunteer pool, and other factors will determine what types of get-out-the-vote tools you can employ to pull favorable voters to the polls. Here are different GOTV techniques you can use:

- **Telephoning.** GOTV telephoning should provide basic voting information, encourage voters to vote by emphasizing the importance of turnout, and offer transportation and babysitting.

Note the last point. Most campaigns only provide transportation and babysitting if a voter requests them. Consequently, very few services are provided, because the system is passive instead of active. Ask the voter if he or she needs either service. Most voters decline, but the offer itself has a positive effect and reinforces the voter's favorable view of the candidate. Many people who do need the service will say yes, and these "orders" can be taken before, as well as on, election day. The idea is to get as many advance appointments as possible and have the appropriate area headquarters respond as needed.

GOTV telephoning should begin on the Saturday before election day. Telephoning can be combined with several other programs, such as foot canvasses or mailings, to repeat a get-out-the-vote message to target voters.

Repeating a message to target voters or providing rides and babysitting services necessitates working out logistical problems well before election day. For instance, if your phone bank is taking orders for rides, you must have a system set up for dispatching drivers to pick up voters.

Logistical problems can be solved if they are identified and considered *before* election day.

- **Mailing.** A GOTV mailing has four basic purposes: to remind the voter where his or her polling place is and the hours the polls are open; to deliver a brief, positive message encouraging the voter to vote; and to emphasize the importance of the election. Recipients of mailings, because they are target voters, will already be favorable or very likely to be favorable voters. The message should emphasize that the candidate needs each individual's vote and that the turnout will make the difference; to give the voter a sample ballot highlighting the candidate's name and ballot position; and to provide a phone number for transportation and babysitting services (if provided).

The most difficult part of producing a GOTV mailing is including polling place information. Obviously, this information is different for each precinct.

A GOTV mailing must be timed to arrive before election day. Check with the Postal Service to get an estimate on how long it will take to deliver your letters.

- **Foot canvass.** Sending campaign workers or volunteers to go door to door and pull target voters to the polls is a large undertaking that ties up a significant amount of GOTV resources. However, having a volunteer come to a voter's door is every effective. Obviously, foot canvassers should not be sent to precincts where there is a great distance between favorable doors. These voters can be contacted much more easily by telephone.

If you decide to use foot canvassers, you should prepare door hangers for them to leave at homes when voters are away. Use foot canvassers as polling place greeters in the early morning (between 7 and 10 AM), or have them hand out literature at transit stops or wear billboards. Don't make the mistake of waking a voter too early in the day—it can only hurt your cause.

- **Visibility programs.** Distribution of literature at plant gates, at busy intersections, and at shopping centers and transit stops are all ways to increase the visibility of your candidate and to heighten voter's awareness of the impending election. High visibility GOTV programs usually begin the Friday before election day. On election day, plant gates (when shifts change), main intersections and transit stops (during rush hours), and office building plazas (during lunch breaks), can be worked. Good advance work is essential to make these programs successful.

- **Checkers.** The checker system is an "old-fashioned" campaign technique that should be considered if you have the resources to utilize it effectively. The system works like this: volunteers who are designated as checkers are assigned to targeted polling places. Each checker is equipped with a list of registered voters on which the unfavorables and Republicans have been crossed out.

The checker's job is to check off each voter as he or she appears at the polling place. This sounds very simple, but sometimes it isn't. For example, if the election officials won't allow the checker to stand near the registrar, the checker will have to personally question each voter. Sometimes checkers set up card tables outside the polls that appear to be official stations and that make the job a little easier (experienced checkers usually have the advantage of knowing many of the voters by sight). The checkers must be serviced by a pick-up team that collects checkers' lists and transports them to area headquarters. A check of the lists at headquarters will reveal Democrats who haven't voted; these voters can then be contacted, urged to vote, and offered transportation to the polls.

The advantage of the checker system is obvious. It limits the number of voters you need to contact to those persons who have not yet voted. It is the ultimate in GOTV targeting. Remember, you must have the capacity to pick up checked lists and then contact voters to make this system worthwhile.

- **Providing transportation to the polls.** Providing transportation to the polls is an excellent technique to make sure your voters—especially elderly and low-income voters—cast their ballots on election day. This program can be integrated with the checker, phoning, foot canvass, and mail GOTV program. (Note: If your campaign headquarters is also offering rides to people who call in, be sure to build in a call-back system to make sure calls are genuine and riders will be ready to go to the polls.)

- **Greeters.** In some areas, it is traditional to have a worker outside the polls on election day to pass out last minute leaflets and sample ballots. There is often a psychological dependency upon them, since they give the impression of a big, serious campaign.

Even if this practice is traditional in your area, think twice



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before committing your volunteers to such a task. Especially for highly publicized races at the top of the ticket, polling place workers seldom change anyone's mind. Election day volunteers can usually be put to better use in other ways.

•*Door hangers.* Putting door hangers on favorable voters' doors the night and early morning before election day is an extremely effective way of reminding your target voters that election day has dawned.

To set up a door hanging program you must have a core of very committed volunteers who are willing to get up at 4 AM on election day and go to target doors to hang your message. If you have the volunteers—and if waking them up at 4 AM won't dampen their willingness to work during the rest of the day—you should plan a door hanging program. Here are a few hints.

The best time to drop door hangers is on election day morning between 4:30 and 7 AM. If you put door hangers on doors the night before, there is chance your opponent's forces might remove them. Only use door hangers in areas where there is a high density of favorable voters. Remember it is dark at 4 AM. Make sure your volunteers have flashlights.

Make sure your volunteers work out logical walking lists *before* they start door hanging. This can usually be done the day before. The most effective system is simply copying down the addresses you want to door hang in the order they will be reached on the back of a hand-sized map of the area.

Notify the police of your door hanging plans.

Door hanging is a wonderful way to start your election day drive. It gets your troops up and going early on election day.

•*Sound trucks.* Sound trucks are traditional election day tools in some areas. If you use them they should only be deployed in overwhelmingly Democratic precincts. Test them in advance to make sure the speaker system is adequate. Sound trucks are useless if people can't understand the message.

The sound truck message should repeat the polling place for the precinct and the hour the polls close and exhort people to vote. Emphasize that their vote is needed. This method requires a live announcer in the truck—as opposed to a recorded message—so that polling place announcements can be changed as the truck crosses precinct lines. Remember, in the wrong neighborhood sound trucks can do more harm than good.

•*Lawyers committee.* You should have several lawyers on call throughout election day who are well versed on election law. Your lawyers should be able to clarify the rights of voters whose names do not appear on the voting lists and the rights of election workers at the polls.

•*Absentee ballots.* An absentee ballot program is not an election day project. An effective absentee ballot program must target potential voters a month or more before election day, secure absentee ballots for them, and then encourage absentee voters to vote. Prime target groups for absentee ballot drives are senior citizens and disabled citizens. A good absentee ballot program will ensure that these people are given a chance to vote.

•*Other GOTV programs.* Providing babysitting and transportation services, having volunteers hold election meetings in their homes right before election day, and asking friendly ministers to urge people to vote are all GOTV techniques that have been used effectively by campaigns.

Here are three sample GOTV programs. Choose one as a blueprint for your GOTV program or tailor the advantageous aspects of several techniques to fit your needs.

GOTV Plan 1

•*GOTV background.* Primary target area is composed of eighty-four precincts. Polling and targeting data indicate that in fifteen precincts, favorables, Democrats, and Independents should be contacted and brought to the polls, while favorables and Democrats should be contacted in the other sixty-nine target precincts. There are thirty-two secondary precincts where no voter identification has been done. Only Democrats should be pulled in these precincts.

•*Resources.* Forty-two outgoing phone lines are available. Phone lists have been produced for eighty-four primary target precincts and secondary target precincts. Forty-six foot canvassers and forty-two checkers are available. A crew of twenty volunteers will work during rush hours. There is an adequate number of supervisors for phone banks and field programs. Forty of the foot canvassers will door hang in the morning. There is a shortage of cars, but some transportation to the polls can be provided for voters.

•*Strategy.* The fifteen top priority precincts will be door hung by forty canvassers. Forty canvassers will work in the top forty-two precincts, with four canvassers held in reserve. Checkers will work the same precincts as foot canvassers. Phoners will each be assigned one precinct that will be foot canvassed and a second precinct from the primary target list. Thirty-two of the phoners will have a second priority precinct to call. None of the phoners working the top fifteen precincts will receive a second priority precinct. Target intersections and transit stops will be worked. Rides will be provided in the top forty-two precincts.

GOTV volunteers will be tested and evaluated by conducting weekend blitzes the second weekend before election day. Blitz schedule includes:

- Friday afternoon:* Be visible at transit stops and intersections.
- Saturday morning and afternoon:* Drop literature in all eighty-four precincts. Be visible at target shopping centers. Identify voters in top thirty persuasion precincts by telephone.
- Saturday night:* Campaign party.
- Sunday:* Continue Saturday activities.

The performance of volunteers will be evaluated on Monday and the GOTV plan reassessed accordingly. Final GOTV plan will be formalized.

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Final GOTV Plan

The GOTV program schedule for the last week of the campaign:

•*Wednesday*: Mail dropped to target voters.

•*Friday morning and afternoon*: Be visible at target transit stops and intersections.

•*Friday night*: Design call-back system to contact all identified favorables.

•*Saturday*: Continue phoning favorables, foot canvass favorable districts, and maintain visibility at shopping centers.

•*Sunday*: Continue Saturday activities.

•*Monday morning and afternoon*: Maintain visibility at transit stops and office areas and prepare door hanging crews.

•*Monday evening*: Finish GOTV calls.

The election day schedule:

4:00 AM. Door hanging crews to staging areas.

4:30. Door hanging crews to fifteen target precincts.

6:20. Door hanging finished.

6:45. Greeters and checkers arrive at top forty-two target polls (door hangers who will work as greeters must move quickly to get to polls).

Maintain visibility at transit stops and main intersections.

10:00. Greeters pick up lists from checkers at forty-two polls. Each greeter goes to phone and calls the phone bank (make sure there are enough incoming telephone lines). Greeters become foot canvassers.

Forty-two phoners at phone banks receive calls from forty-two greeters. Each greeter/foot canvasser is teamed with a specific phoner and they both have the same precinct list in front of them. Greeter/foot canvasser tells phoners which voters have already cast ballots. Greeter/foot canvasser tells phoner what streets he or she will work. Phoner will call other streets.

10:30. Phoners begin calling top forty-two precincts. Once they have called through top forty-two precincts twice, they go to secondary and tertiary lists.

Greeters start working as foot canvassers in top forty-two precincts. They work streets that phoners are not phoning.

12:30 PM. Foot canvassers break for food and rest.

1:00. Phoners stop calling. Foot canvassers call in and compare notes with the phoners as to which voters have been contacted. Phoners and foot canvassers change and work different streets.

1:30. Phoning continues, foot canvassing continues.

4:00. Foot canvassers pick up lists from checkers and call phoners. Voters who have voted are purged from the list. Again phoners and canvassers divide the list of voters to be contacted.

4:30. Foot canvassers rest. Maintain visibility at transit stops and intersections. Phoners keep working.

5:15. Foot canvassers back on street.

6:00. Phoners stop. Checkers call in last names.

6:15. Phoners start again. Foot canvassers check in with checkers.

6:30. Foot canvassers on street. Checkers work as greeters.

8:00. Everything continues until doors close at polls.

Obviously, this program is extremely sophisticated and involves extensive planning and quite a few dedicated workers. But the plan has worked. Moreover, forming precinct teams (phoner, canvasser-greeter, and checker-greeter) establishes a sense of camaraderie and team spirit that keep an organization going all during election day. Phoners, especially, become more and more excited as they work with their field partners to track down and move voters to the polls.

GOTV Plan 2

The final five-day timetable:

•*Friday*: Begin calling identified supporters and begin blind GOTV calls to all Democratic households. Make final preparations for weekend canvass. Check with Election Boards for any changes. Submit all absentee ballots.

•*Saturday*: Continue phoning. Foot canvass all divisions targeted for GOTV (roughly all divisions with better than a sixty percent Democratic registration and a less than seventy-five percent turnout in the 1976 General Election). Drop literature in shopping areas, and establish and maintain visibility. Organize GOTV volunteer parties or rallies.

•*Sunday*: Have friendly ministers give GOTV sermons and have volunteers distribute literature at churches. Continue all Saturday activities. Have meetings with all GOTV supervisors, then meetings with all election day volunteers.

•*Monday*: Complete phoning. Distribute literature at plant gates when second shift comes. Remind workers to vote before they have to come back to work. Be the last group that puts up signs near polling places (between midnight and 6:00 AM). Make heavy literature drops in high traffic areas. Finish materials preparation for election day.

The election day schedule:

5:30 AM. Volunteers meet for plant gate blitz, covering all gates in order, according to number of workers.

6:30. Checkers report to polling places, check machines for Republican chicanery.

7:00. Polls open, drivers begin delivering voters to polls. Lawyers are on call. Have human signs at major intersections.

9:00. Have checkers pick up lists at polls and deliver to phoners.

10:00. Initiate phoning and first GOTV foot canvass.

12:00. Deliver food. Maintain visibility in office areas (courthouse squares, etc. Skip areas that are very Republican).



Get Out the Vote

- 1:00 PM. Second checker sweep through polls.
- 2:00. Second foot canvass. Hit all plant gates again.
- 3:00. Human signs.
- 4:00. Final foot canvass. Final checker sweep (for phones only).
- 6:00. Food delivered.
- 8:00. Don't stop contacting voters until doors are locked at polling places. Checkers bring results to headquarters.

GOTV Plan 3

- 5:00 AM. County headquarters opens. Distribute sample ballots at plant gates and job sites. Use mobile public address units at selected sites.
- 6:00. Distribute sample ballots at eateries, on buses, and at office buildings (three hours for each activity). Open satellite headquarters in target precincts. Have precinct captains report in; telephone county headquarters.
- 6:15. Volunteers report to satellite HQ.
- 6:25. Precinct captains call county headquarters and report volunteer strength.
- 6:30. Precinct captains and volunteers report to respective polling locations.
- 7:00. Polls Open
- 8:00. Door hanger distribution begins to all residences rated 1, 2, or 3 by GOTV targeting.
- 10:00. GOTV telephone canvass urges targeted voters (rated 1, 2, or 3) to vote early (ten hours). Check polls for the number of votes cast. Have precinct captains report vote count to county HQ. Distribute sample ballots at selected sites (nine hours).
- 10:15. Begin door knocking effort to raise voter turnout in precincts with low turnout.
- 2:00 PM. Start second telephone effort in low voting precincts to raise voter turnout.
- 2:15. Start second door knocking effort to raise voter turnout in low voting precincts.

- 2:30. Have human billboards face incoming traffic returning to target precincts (three hours).
- 3:00. Distribute sample ballots on buses (three hours).
- 4:30. Begin third and final poll check on the number of votes cast. Precinct captains should report vote count to county headquarters. Begin third and final telephone effort to raise voter turnout in low voting precincts.
- 4:45. Begin third door knocking effort to raise voter turnout in down precincts.
- 7:00. Polls Close. Precinct captains oversee vote count and report runoff tallies to county headquarters.

With these sample programs and any other GOTV techniques, design a GOTV program to suit your selected target areas and your resources. Remember the logistical considerations that must be taken into account for each program you set up. For instance, GOTV Plan 1 required that greeters, checkers, and phoners have the same lists. Foot canvassers had to have the telephone number and name of the phoner they were teamed with. The foot canvassers needed to be familiar with their precincts. The phone banks had to stop calling at specified times. All phone lists had to be coded to show which people to call. Phoners had to have slips for driver requests to be forwarded to a dispatcher. Working the bugs out of your GOTV program *before* election day is essential to its success.

Evaluating the GOTV Program

Is the GOTV program you have designed actually possible? Do you have the resources to do it?

It is essential to ask these questions before election day and to redesign your program if your plan just isn't realistic. A good way to assess your volunteer strength is to test it—as was done in GOTV Plan 1—two weeks before election day.

Remember, your campaign isn't the only one interested in GOTV. Other Democratic candidates and members of the Democratic coalition share a common interest. Coordinate your GOTV efforts with theirs. Try to agree on a consistent approach and combine the available volunteers. GOTV will then realize its maximum potential, and so will your campaign.