



Canvass Captains

Training Guide

Canvassing is absolutely the most *effective* way for us to build community and foster civic participation. There is no more important form of relationship building than conversations at the doors, having in-person conversations to invite neighbors into beloved community. As Canvass Captains you play a pivotal role in the success of building that community power.

What do Canvass Captains do?

The Canvass Captains manage the canvass operation for their team. Canvass Captains ensure that all canvass packets are prepared with the right information and that all canvassers are trained effectively AND efficiently. They set the tone, facilitate training and report success to each canvass and to the larger team.

Best Practices

Organize the Canvass Space – A well-run Canvass Launch must be organized prior to volunteers' arrival. Without an organized space, we spend more time training than having conversations with neighbors. Be sure your canvass materials are entirely put together and organized – that way you can get your volunteers out the door quicker. See the Canvass Launch Diagram and Checklist for tips on setting up your canvass space.

Enlist Help – A well-run Canvass Launch needs a lot of helping hands for signing volunteers in, coaching them, checking out packets, and receiving them when they return. Work with your team to tackle these important tasks together!

Explain the Why and the Who – To have transformational conversations and knock on as many doors as possible, we need to communicate the purpose for our door knocks. We have specific goals we know we need to achieve to build beloved community and POWER and we know that these conversations are effective. Be sure to spend two minutes communicating just how important their work is.

Set Expectations and Goals – A volunteer who walks in the door may not know what a “successful” day out on the doors looks like, nor will they necessarily have previous canvassing experience. As the Canvass Captains, it is your job to reiterate to volunteers that completing the packet and recording responses is highly important to ensure we are building our lists and inviting new neighbors into beloved community. We have a lot of neighbors to talk to! Each volunteer has already taken the time to come to a canvass, check out a packet, and walk the neighborhood—encourage them to make the most of it while out there!

Provide your Contact Information - Make sure you give each volunteer your contact information just in case they have a question while they are out in the field.

Thank Them! – Let every one of your volunteers know how grateful you are they came out to knock on doors, whether they finish their packet or not. Take a minute to develop a relationship with them and let them know you'll get in touch soon about the next event.