



WOMEN'S MARCH CALL YOUR SISTER/CANVASS YOUR SISTER 2018 GOTV SUPPLEMENTARY RESOURCE

INTRODUCTION

Taking back Congress in November 2018 will take collective action from women, femmes, and allies in states across the country. Personal outreach to voters from other people in their communities are some of the best drivers for getting people to the polls. When people connect with their neighbors on their shared values and hear that people in their communities are using their votes accordingly, they are more likely to vote too. Simply put, when people see the power of their vote, they vote.

We have designed this Get-Out-The-Vote (GOTV) toolkit to support Women's March chapters and activists coordinating their own local Power to The Polls (P2P) GOTV events with **our Call Your Sister initiative** (<http://www.powertothepolls.com/call-your-sister.html>). Please note that this is a supplement to the guides for Call Your Sister (live on the website) and Canvass Your Sister (coming mid-October).

VOTER CONTACT STRATEGY

Before embarking on voter contact phonebanks or door knocking canvasses for GOTV, you should develop a strategy to make sure that you are contacting the right voters to meet your goals. Whether you aim to persuade voters to support a candidate, an initiative or to get low propensity voters to increase their participation in the election, a data driven strategy will increase the likelihood of success.

STEP ONE: EVALUATING THE LANDSCAPE

Set ambitious yet achievable goals for electoral outcomes, organizing targets, and internal chapter growth. Please give thought to the considerations below.

LANDSCAPE ANALYSIS

- Evaluate your state's current political activity and any key constituencies or demographics. Speak with candidates, political operatives and political party officials to find out what their polling and market research is revealing about GOTV targets.
- Think about what you learned from the primary election. Were there surprises or did the expected candidates win?

- What type of voter contact activity would best help you meet your goals and complement the work already being done in your state? For example, on a college campus you may want to text young voters from a phonebank list, but in a neighborhood with a lot of home ownership knocking on doors would be successful, and in areas with a lot of renters, phonebanks may be more effective.
- Finally, ask yourself two important questions: who didn't vote in 2016? And if they had voted would it have changed the outcome of the election? This may be the most important factor for choosing your voter contact targets.

WHICH RACES TO ENGAGE

- What are the key races in your state? Is there a competitive Senate race happening in your state? Check the Cook Political Report to see which races may be considered competitive.
- Are there competitive Congressional races in your state? Districts that have a chance to turn blue or an important seat to defend? Check out our partners like Swing Left to start identifying which districts need to be flipped vs defended.
- Are there strategic/competitive state and local level races to engage? This question may be particularly important for identifying community-level progressive and women of color first-time candidates who could succeed with enough early support.
- Consult your local political parties and operatives.

IMPORTANT DATES AND DEADLINES

- Make sure to consult the 2018 Election Calendar for your county or state and consider the following dates:
 - Voter Registration Deadline
 - Debate and Candidate Forum Schedules
 - Absentee / Vote-by-Mail Ballots get mailed out
 - In-Person Early Voting Begins (find out where)
 - Last day to request an Absentee / Vote-by-Mail Ballot
 - Last day to mail your Absentee / Vote-by-Mail Ballot
 - General Election Date

DYNAMICS TO CONSIDER

Consider the dynamics of your community when choosing the type of events to hold for your P2P campaign. For example, if you live in a state with Photo ID requirements for voting, then your campaign may want to target voters who were denied election access in 2016, and the script should include a “Know Your Rights” tips section.

The dynamics to consider could range from constituency demographics to policies unique to your region:

- Voter suppression efforts – does your state have restrictive voting laws?
- Is gerrymandering an issue in your state or region?
- Are there currently state Supreme Court cases pending on priority issues that could be affected by elected officials in your state?
- Are efforts being made to combat these issues?
- Who are your vocal constituencies, interest groups, supporters and opponents in your area?
- What are the dominant media narratives in your city, state and region?
- What are the historically significant dates and activities scheduled in your community?
- Have any of the political parties done vote challenges and removed voters from the rolls?
- What is the predominant ethnicity or culture in your community and what are the places, events and activities important to them?

STEP TWO: CONSULTATION

It is always good to get an outside or second opinion when making important decisions on any project. This is especially true when engaging in elections. After all the hard work, evaluation, preparation, and execution, you have a one-day shot (one month for absentee ballots) at getting this right every two years. The strategy has to be as close to perfect as possible.

Once your team has answers to the questions above, the Women’s March political staff and volunteer leadership are available for a direct consultation and review of your plan. National team members are connected to many the political parties and electoral entities doing polling and research, and we may have some good insights to help you.

A consultation is not required to get access to call sheets and walk sheets from the Women’s March’s voter file, but it is provided as an optional step to assist chapters with GOTV. Resources and help are always available from the national team at any step in your campaign’s process, so feel free to schedule a meeting at any time by emailing gotv@womensmarch.com.

STEP THREE: GETTING CALL SHEETS AND WALK SHEETS

Now that you have completed your strategy, and possibly talked it through with the national political team, it is time to get you your call or walk sheets.

Women's March uses a voter file with enhanced data to provide our chapters with the freshest information on voters in your districts. The information provided in the call sheets and walk sheets will only be enough to sufficiently complete the task. These resources will be sent in a locked PDF for printing out only. The information and data on voters is leased by the Women's March and may not be collected by the national organization or affiliated chapters or huddles for any purpose other than contacting the voter(s) concerning the 2018 election.

To request your call sheets or walk sheets for your phonebanking or canvassing party please visit the [Call Your Sister page http://www.powertothepolls.com/call-your-sister.html](http://www.powertothepolls.com/call-your-sister.html)

THE "VOLUNTEER ASK" SCRIPT

The success of your GOTV effort will be determined by the size of your team. Whether you are talking to your chapter members, making a GOTV call, or registering someone to vote, you should also ask them if they would like to volunteer.

SCRIPT:

Thanks for chatting with me today. It takes a large enough team to contact thousands of voters with disabilities to make sure they are prepared to vote. Can we count on you to volunteer for a few hours this week at our office and help us call more voters?

IF YES

Thanks! Let me go through the shift options for you can get some info from you. [SIGN THEM UP]

IF NO OR HESITANT

You know direct contact with voters has proven to be the ONLY reliable way to make sure people vote or have all the information they need. It can be a little uncomfortable at first, but you'll get the hang of it...I did! Are you sure we can't count on you to help us get out the disability vote?

VOLUNTEER SIGN UP/CONFIRMATION CALL SHEET

EVENT:

DATE & TIME:

LOCATION:

SHIFT LEADER:

NAME	BEST PHONE	EMAIL ADDRESS	CONFIRM?	SHOW?
HUMPTY DUMPTY	(916) 555-5555	BROKENEGGSHELL@THEWALL.COM	YES	YES

VOTER CONTACT TACTICS

When choosing which type of voter contact tactic to use, your team should consider the contact method's reliability and your chapter's capacities for volunteers, preparation time and material production and locations to host GOTV events. Some activities are more reliable than others for moving a low propensity voter to turn out and vote.

- **Door Knocking Canvasses:** 90% reliable. People tend to be more impacted by a face to face conversation and hold to the commitment to vote they told the volunteer.
- **Phone Banks:** 60% reliable. People tend to be less committed when speaking with someone through a device, which loses some of the personal connection.
- **Text Banks:** 50% reliable. People have the opportunity to ignore the plea by not responding or deleting the text, which has less opportunity for conversation.

You can counter the reliability factor with increased volume of contacts. For example, face-to-face conversations tend to be more impactful for turning out voters than phone banks. Volunteers can often make more connections by phone during a shift than on a door-knocking canvass.

This is why campaigns often use phonebanks for mainstream voter contact of high-to-middle propensity voters or early on for low propensity voters. Closer to Election Day, they will switch to face-to-face interaction with door-knocking canvassing to get low propensity voters to the polls.

Here is the general connection rule for the numbers of voters contacted in a 2 to 3-hour volunteer shift for each voter contact type:

- **Door Knocking Canvass:** **10 Completed Contacts.** It takes a volunteer more time to travel to and from the neighborhood and walk from home to home.
- **Phone Banks:** **20 Completed Contacts.** Volunteers can make more calls than knocks during a shift and have the chance to leave a personally voicemail if the voter is not home.
- **Text Banks:** **30 Completed Contacts.** Volunteers can send out many more texts than calls or door knocks during this time and about half of the people will respond.

The way a voter votes can tell you a lot about their intentions and level of engagement in the voting process. People who vote by mail tend to be high propensity voters, although they split between those who mail in their ballot and those who physically bring their ballot to the polling place. Election Day voters can be less reliable or may encounter surprises in their day that prevent them from getting to their polling place on Election Day. You will want to match the urgency level of the voter contact method to the reliability of the voter's practices. Here are some general rules about how and when to use each type of method:

- **Door-Knocking Canvasses: Election Day Voters.** Use this method to capture low to middle propensity voters who will vote on Election Day. This type of contact may also be needed for absentee ballot voter who will drop off their ballot on Election Day or missed the deadline to mail their ballots. Absentee/drop off voters often forget to sign and seal their ballots and we will want to remind them to do this, so their ballot won't be declared invalid.*
- **Phonebanks: Absentee / Mail Voters.** Use this method for getting absentee ballot voters to mail in their ballots early, locking in progressive votes ahead of election day. If your team has the capacity, this type of contact can also be helpful for contacting Election Day voters ahead of time to make sure they have all the information needed like polling location.
- **Text Banks: Young Voters and Disabled Voters.** Use this method to connect with young voters who may be in a different city for college and tend to be more responsive to digital media. Digital contact is also more accessible for people with disabilities and can be a great way to connect to this voting bloc which often gets left out of GOTV strategies. Texting is also useful for disseminating links to voter information like deadline reminders and polling location look up for Absentee Voters and Election Day Voters.

*Door Knocking Canvasses on Election Day are good to partner with a poll rides campaign. When you engage a voter at their home on election their barrier to turning out may be needing a ride. Be prepared to offer these voters a ride to the polls if knocking on their door on Election Day.

GOTV BEST PRACTICES

Here are some additional suggestions or best practices used by GOTV organizers and other constituencies that have proven to be the most effective for activating voters:

Timing: The frequency of contacts should increase as the election draws closer. If your organization is only able to place one phone call to your targeted voters, for instance, this call should happen as close to when they vote as possible (early for absentee voters, closer to the election for Election Day voters).

Frequency: You should plan to make at least 3-5 contacts with your targeted voters that talk specifically about voting. These contacts are most effective if they are a combination of direct mail and phonebanks. The more contact you are able to make, the greater the likelihood that a person will vote. This is true even if voters become disgruntled by your contacts; studies show the angrier they get the greater the likelihood is that they will vote – it just takes some people a little longer to figure out that you will stop calling if they vote.

Message: Your GOTV message should be short, no more than 1 or 2 sentences, and consistent. Additionally, this message should make the connection between a personal issue and voting.

DEVELOPING THE GOTV MESSAGE

This message should make the connection between women’s issues and voting (e.g. “if you care about protecting a woman’s right to choose, vote on November 6th.”) Make sure to make the message personal and draw the connection to the impact an elected official will have as a decision-maker on the issues important to the voter. This message should also be incorporated into your messages for email blasts and social media.

You may want to conduct a survey of your local community members to discover which messages resonate with them most. This could be an online survey or gathered from feedback during a phonebank. Many of the most successful campaigns use a survey as an excuse to call their voter universe early on and begin to engage voters. Additionally, draw from the strategy section of this toolkit and work with local political partners to access data and polling to create your message.

The Women’s March national political team will also be able to provide your chapter or team assistance with creating messages and sample scripts for GOTV efforts. Email us at gotv@womensmarch.com

VOTER CONTACT TIPS

- Smile! They can see it in your face (door knocking) or hear it in your voice (phonebanking). When texting it's generally okay to use an emoji with "Thank You" after you get a response confirming they will vote.
- Ask for the person on your list only, if they are not available do NOT mark any boxes on your walk/call list. We will attempt to contact them again later.
- Tell them you are a volunteer. People like volunteers, plus as a volunteer you aren't responsible for the organization or policy differences with the voter.
- Stick to the script! It's there for you to use and people expect volunteers to use a script.
- Mark ONLY the right box, as someone else will use this list after you.
- Print clearly. Someone other than you may have to data enter these records.

VOTING MOTIVATOR'S SCRIPT

- **URGENCY STATEMENT:** You know this is a really important election; our elected leaders will create the policies that affect our daily lives as well as our future. Many politicians look at voter turnout numbers when they consider which populations should get the most attention. Can we count on you to [mail in your ballot today or tomorrow] vote on Election Day?
- **LOCAL ISSUES:** I understand, I live in this community too and share your concerns. We all have some big decisions to make this election year. Have you thought about: [INSERT YOUR LOCAL ADVOCACY ISSUES]?
- **"I'M NOT VOTING THIS YEAR":** Our nation / city / state is at a crossroads right now. The freedoms we relied on just two years ago are now at risk of being taken away. One way we can change this is by changing our elected decision-makers. Can I count on you to join me in protecting our rights by voting?
- **"I DON'T UNDERSTAND THE CANDIDATES AND ISSUES":** Have you had a chance to read [LOCAL VOTER GUIDE]? For information about the choices on your ballot you can visit [WEBSITE].