



How to Win Elections

A GUIDE FOR NEIGHBORHOOD WORKERS

Written, designed and produced by Democratic volunteers

HOW TO WIN ELECTIONS: A Guide for Neighborhood Workers

This precinct manual was prepared by volunteers working under the direction of the Organization Committee of the California Democratic Council. Information is based upon material developed at a Precinct Workshop sponsored by the Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee, upon a precinct manual prepared by Alan Cranston for the California Democratic Council, and upon an earlier precinct manual prepared by Kay Wilson for the Los Angeles County Democratic Central Committee; revised and edited by Alan Cranston and Helen Myers.

Lay-out and production were handled by Melbey Kidd and Eugene Greenwood. Art work by Miss Julie Henning.

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Helen Myers, Chairman
Organization Committee

Alan Cranston, President
California Democratic Council

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- **How To Organize A Democratic Club**
- **How To Conduct A Registration Drive**
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- **How To Run A Low Budget Assembly Campaign**
- **How To Win Elections In The Precincts**

CALIFORNIA DEMOCRATIC COUNCIL

Northern Headquarters
212 Sutter Street
San Francisco, Calif.
DO 2-7020

Southern Headquarters
311 S. Vermont Ave.
Los Angeles 5, Calif.
DU 8-2175

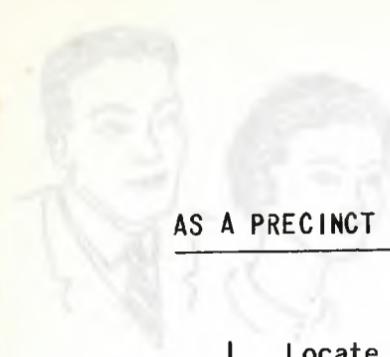


So you are a Democratic Precinct Worker!

That means that you are a volunteer — because the Democratic party, which has always been the party of the people, has no paid workers. All of its local workers are volunteers. And probably you are new to political work. And — just possibly — a bit at a loss about how best to perform your job?

There is a technique for most effective precinct work — wrong ways and a right way; hard ways and an easy way to get results.

Why learn the hard way? This booklet will give you some pointers on the way experienced workers go about it.



AS A PRECINCT WORKER YOU HAVE TWO MAIN JOBS!

1. Locate your sure Democratic votes

Now that you have picked a precinct, start by covering it door-to-door, apartment-to-apartment, even room-to-room. Learn the attitudes of all the voters. Keep a record of what you learn. The records show which voters are likely to vote for our candidates.

2. Get your votes to the polls

On election day make sure every voter supporting Democrats gets to the polls and actually votes. Remind them to vote. Telephone, baby-sit, drive them to the polls. Check to make sure they really have voted.

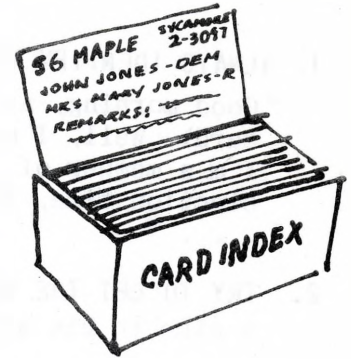
AND DO BOTH JOBS SYSTEMATICALLY

These two steps are simple enough. An average precinct requires about eight man-hours to canvass. Whenever you come across an enthusiastic Democrat, try to enlist his help as an assistant. This will lighten your load and it will release experienced workers to cover more precincts!

WHAT TO PREPARE

1. A Card Index of the voters in a precinct area with address, name, telephone numbers. Shown is a sample 3 x 5 card.

File your cards according to street number. This makes it possible to call upon Democrats in a natural sequence. It also makes it possible to parcel out the calls by blocks to helpers or to teams of workers.



2. A folder containing:

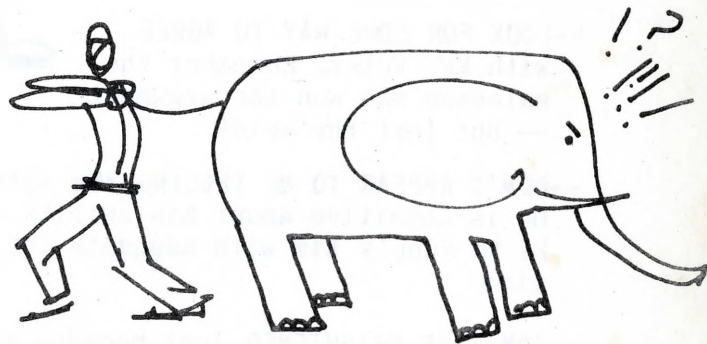
- a. Fact sheets for answering questions;
- b. Literature to leave with the voters.

3. Prepare YOURSELF!

- Find out personal information about our candidates. Voters are often more curious about personalities than issues.
- Get acquainted with the basic issues of the campaign and the candidates' position on them.
- Familiarize yourself with the content of the literature you are going to distribute.
- Dress neatly and appropriately for the time and place. You are asking the voter to identify with you. Try to appear the kind of person he would want you to be.

WHERE TO SPEND YOUR EFFORTS

1. Don't waste time on the voter who is definitely tied to the opposition. Probably nothing can be said to change change his opinion.
2. Don't spend much time on the voter who is already solidly behind your candidate — EXCEPT ON ELECTION DAY!
3. DO WORK HARD to arouse the interest in the great majority of voters who are apathetic, who haven't made up their minds, and who don't think they'll vote anyhow!



WHAT TO TALK ABOUT

1. ALWAYS IDENTIFY YOURSELF by name and affiliation.

"Good morning, are you Mrs. Smith? (you'll have her name from your card). Well, I'm John Jones. I live over on Camellia Avenue, and I'm a member of the Temple City Democratic Club. Now that it is election time, I've volunteered to help our Democratic candidates . . ."

2. TRY TO GET THE VOTER TO TALK Just by his expression you may get a clue to his attitude. A tactful question may break the ice.

Voters usually don't like to be asked straight out if they are supporting your candidates (some feel it is none of your business). But a question like, "Have you received any of Senator Richard's literature yet?" or "Did you hear Governor Stevenson's last speech" or "Is there anything about your sample ballot you would like to have explained?" may lead to conversation that reveals the voter's attitude.

WHILE YOU AND THE VOTER TALK

--DON'T ARGUE or try to high-pressure anyone into agreeing with you. There's lots of room in the Democratic party for differences of opinion. A man may be a good Democrat, even if he disagrees with you. It's important only that he know about our candidates and votes for them.

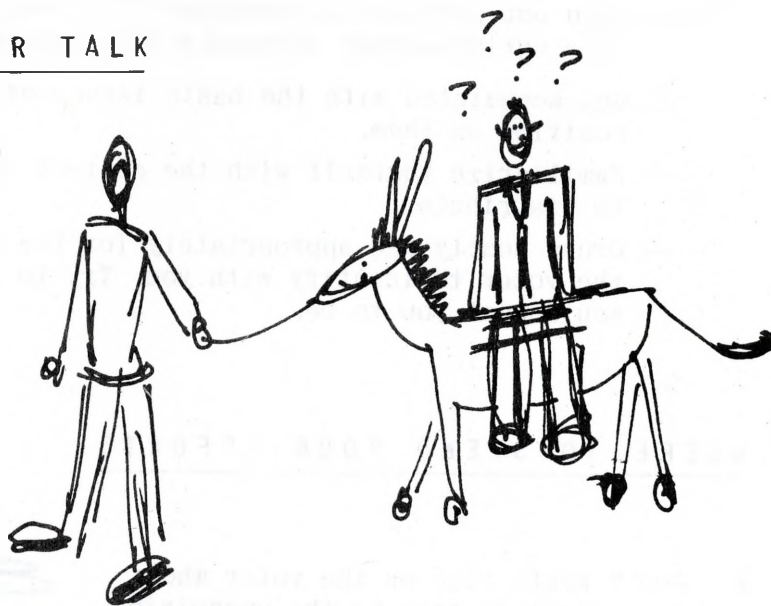
--LOOK FOR SOME WAY TO AGREE with Mr. Voter. Remember the salesman who won the argument — but lost the sale!

--DON'T APPEAR TO BE TELLING the voter what to do.

He is sensitive about his ability to make his own decisions. Your role is to supply him with adequate information so he can make up his own mind.

--DON'T BE FRIGHTENED just because you can't quote by heart the Congressional Record or the United Nations Charter. Right now, you know more about the candidates and the issues than most of the voters you'll meet. As election day approaches, you'll have campaign literature in your hands. That's all you need.

--DON'T STAY BEYOND YOUR WELCOME. If you don't click immediately against such competition as a crying infant or supper on the stove, say, with a SMILE, "I'll be back".



SUPPLY THE VOTER WITH LITERATURE

Aim to have the literature READ after you have gone —point out paragraphs that might be of special interest to him.

If you do not know the answer to a specific question, say you will find out and call back.

THEN — DO CALL BACK. Nothing makes a better impression than a faithfully performed promise.

NOTE: Be careful about putting words into the candidate's mouth. Make sure you are not confusing your personal opinions and feelings for those of the candidate.)



MAKE ARRANGEMENTS FOR ELECTION DAY

If you or the voter can foresee that he will have difficulty getting to the polls, arrange in advance for a ride, for baby-sitting, an absentee ballot or whatever else is needed. MAKE A NOTE OF THIS ON YOUR CARD.

KEEP A RECORD OF YOUR CALL

As soon as you are out on the sidewalk — and out of sight of the voter — mark your card. Indicate the voter's reaction with a word or brief phrase. Write NH if not at home. In the event some other volunteer must follow up your calls on election day, your comments will guide his actions. Also you will need these comments yourself to recall the voter's attitude and situation.

WHEN TO CANVASS

Calls may be started as early as six weeks before Election Day. If time permits towards the end, perhaps you can make return visits to the doubtful or the non-committal voters listed on your cards. A second call may shore up their confidence in your candidate.

In heavily Democratic precincts it is often worthwhile to call on the registered Republicans as well as the Democrats. They will frequently reflect the attitudes of their Democratic neighbors.



GETTING OUT THE VOTE

WHAT TO DO ON ELECTION EVE

The night before election, make your final check. Forget about the doubtful voters and those who are "agin" you. Work with the sure votes. Make a quick home visit if you can. Otherwise — telephone.



FINAL SHOTS

1. Remind them where the polls are located.
2. Ask them to vote early.

The more people who vote early, the easier is your job on election day. When someone says he can't vote early, find out when he intends to vote and make a note on your card. Then you won't spend time chasing down the "after-work" voter — until after work.

3. Find out about any last-minute problems getting to the polls.

Arrange for rides, baby-sitters or whatever is needed.

4. Urge a vote for all Democratic candidates.

Leave a slate card or a slate piece of literature. Help voter fill out his sample ballot if he wishes this help.

AND FOR YOURSELF

Make a final forecast of the vote in your precinct — estimate how many Democrats will vote, how many Republicans, and how many votes each candidate will get. A comparison of the actual vote with your prediction will be fun and educational.

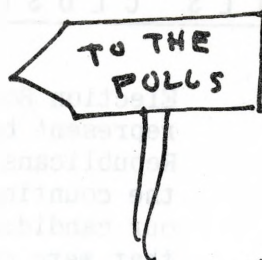
	EST.	ACT
DEM	100	?
REP	99	?

DUTIES ON ELECTION DAY

The Election Code requires that a precinct list be posted at the door of each polling place. Once every hour until 4:00 P.M., it is required that a line be drawn through the names of the people who have voted. Inside are two other copies of the precinct list. These must be kept up to date from the opening of the polls until they are closed.

Check the list several times during the day. Pull the cards of those who have voted and pay no more attention to them. As the day progresses you will be left with a dwindling supply of SURE vote cards to work on.

Fulfill any previous arrangements you made for rides, baby-sitting, etc. Be prepared to meet last minute emergencies of the same kind.



**YOUR GOAL IS TO HAVE 100% VOTE OF THOSE VOTERS
WHOM YOU KNOW TO BE ON OUR SIDE**

HELPFUL TIPS

1. If you have to work on election day, try to get some helpers to carry on while you're at your business.
2. Try to find a housewife willing to telephone the names of those who haven't voted from time to time to remind them to vote.
3. Chase your votes all day long until all your SURE VOTES are cast. Odds are you won't get some until 15 minutes before the polls close — including the votes of some who fully intended to vote before they went to work in the morning.
4. The law requires employers to give each employee two hours off to vote. If you can, take your two hours starting at 3:00 o'clock. Then you can work in your precinct from 3:00 until the polls close.

AFTER THE POLLS CLOSE

Election Board officials do not have to represent both parties. They may ALL be Republicans. You may therefore want to watch the counting of the ballots to make sure that our candidates actually get all of the votes that were cast for them.



THE COUNTING OF BALLOTS IS OPEN TO
ANY MEMBER OF THE PUBLIC WHO CHOOSES
TO STAY AROUND AND WATCH.

PROCEDURE FOR COUNTING BALLOTS

One official reads the ballots out loud while another looks over his shoulder. Two other officials record the vote on tally sheets which must always be kept in clear view of the bystanders. If you are alone, watch the ballots being read; if there are two of you, one should watch the ballots and one the tally sheets.

SPOILED BALLOTS

A ballot must be marked with the rubber stamp in the voting square (except for write-in candidates where just the written name is enough). Rubber stamp marks partly in the voting square and partly outside of it can count.

In counting ballots, the important thing is whether the voter's choice can be determined, not technicalities. The fact that the ballot is improperly marked for one office does not invalidate the rest of the ballot. The rest of the ballot is counted.

FINAL RESULTS

The final totals in your precinct must be posted on the outside of the polling place when the counting is completed.

VICTORY DEPENDS ON YOU

Billboards, broadcasts, advertisements, speeches by the candidates — all these are vital to a campaign. But precinct work is the most important element.

Effective precinct work can win this election — by insuring that true Democrats vote.

Ineffective precinct work can lose — Democratic votes that stay home on election day are votes for the Republicans.

Ten votes may not seem like many.

But ten additional SURE Democratic votes gotten to the polls in every precinct would sweep this or ANY election

Harry Truman carried California in 1948 by less than one vote per precinct — his margin was 17,000 votes in the state's 22,000 precinct.

THE END

(of Republican rule in California)