



Precinct Captain Training Manual

Taking back our nation...one street at a time.

OVERVIEW

Influencing government starts by organizing the most basic and smallest political subdivision

The Precinct

The most basic building bloc in our Country and the State of Missouri is the Precinct. In the larger metropolitan areas precincts are grouped into Townships or Wards. Each one of these entities is headed by Committeeman/woman and these people in a county form a central or county committee headed by a chairman elected by the committee people. Committee people are elected every two years or every four years depending on the rules of that particular county. The people elected to these positions form the backbone of the Party structure in the state. And if we aim to change the Party, this is where it starts.

One other point, the committee people we elect are supposed to be involved with the people living in their precincts/townships/wards, educate them about political candidates, make sure citizens are registered to vote, encourage voter turnout and generally are involved in their neighborhoods through monthly meetings.

Unfortunately, many of our committee people are no longer involved in this process and this is where the grassroots initiatives have stepped in to fill the void.

In today's environment, many voters are apathetic because of the failure of the political parties to develop and maintain lasting relationships with their voters that continue after the last election.

This is where the precinct or committee people come in. Their purpose is to establish a link between the local voter and the party and maintain this relationship throughout, even between the normal two-year election cycles. Their purpose is to get information for people about candidates, local issues and become the go-to people that know how to get answers for the citizens in the area. If these people do a good job, the voters in their precinct or neighborhood will listen to them the next time they come around and promote a candidate.

And establishing relationships will make people feel comfortable and they will be more open to discuss issues.

So you can see how important your work as a Precinct Captain or Neighborhood volunteer will be in building a strong supportive conservative organization and assisting campaigns and candidates in achieving electoral victory.

Precinct Captains have 4 main goals and responsibilities:

1. Recruiting Volunteers -- As a Precinct Captain, you're going to put together your precinct team by recruiting through your own personal network and neighborhood clubs and organizations.

2. Contacting Your Neighbors -- Your job will be registering neighbors to vote, as well as encouraging voters to get involved with community activities and to support issues and candidates

3. Communication & Tracking of Efforts – Communicating and collecting information about voters is the most important thing that you can do as Precinct Captain, especially in between election cycles. As a neighbor you will be in the best position to have quality conversations with the voters in your precinct. You will be in charge of reporting all voter contact in your precinct. This information is invaluable to campaigns that will use it to target voters and tailor messaging.

4. Building a conservative Community in your Precinct or your neighborhood – In addition to going door-to-door and making phone calls, you can plan local events, or participate in local events, like backyard BBQs or house parties to recruit new individuals that want to participate in local governance.

What is a County/Township Committee? A township is a geographic area of the county set up based on population size and natural boundaries. A township could have 30 -35,000 people. A township is divided into voting precincts. Townships and Precinct maps are available from your local election authorities.

What is a precinct? You can think of your precinct as your immediate neighborhood. A precinct is the smallest political geographical unit maintained by the county. An average Missouri precinct contains approximately 1000-2000 registered voters, though the land area varies dramatically. Voters within a precinct will cast ballots on Election Day at the same polling location. Sometimes more than one precinct votes at the same location. This is determined by the county election board.

Who can be a Precinct Captain? Anybody registered Republican can be a Precinct Captain. As long as you commit the time, and be willing to talk to your neighbors, you can become a grassroots leader.

What is the minimum time commitment? There is no minimum time commitment. As long as you are able to contact your neighbors on a regular basis and build a community in your neighborhood, you are free to delegate your responsibilities to your Precinct Volunteers or Block Captains and allocate your time, as you like. As a Precinct Captain you can walk your neighborhood as often as you like, but particularly before an election.

How do I get the materials I need (precinct maps, lists, etc.)? Most of the material you might need is available on this website or from your County's election authority. If there is a MOPP County Coordinator in your County, that person should be able to help you get started.

What if I've never been a Precinct Captain before? One of the empowering aspects of becoming involved in local politics is to seize the opportunity to step out of your comfort zone and do something you have never done before. Maybe you can start by attending various political meetings in your area to become familiar with the people and the political climate. In addition, we will do periodic training sessions.

TYPES OF VOTER CONTACT

There are several different methods that can be used to communicate with voters on the precinct level. Precinct Captains should choose the most appropriate methods based on the campaign's objective and the available resources (i.e. number of volunteers).

Voter Contact Techniques

There are two types of voter contact: low intensity and high intensity. Both Techniques are highly driven by modern computer and electronic communication technologies, allowing campaigns to communicate with targeted voters in a very personal way.

Low-Intensity activities are not as individualized and are not high impact. Low-intensity voter contact programs can still impart information about candidate campaign or issues and can be effective in moving voters. However, low-intensity programs are not as persuasive as high-intensity programs.

High Intensity programs are more individualized and more persuasive. High-intensity voter contact techniques often involve "two-way" communication. They give voters an opportunity to express their opinions about the candidate and the campaign. The actual voter-identification programs - operations that organize staff or volunteers to talk to voters and ask their candidate preference and opinion on specific issues - are high-intensity programs.

Examples of Low-Intensity Voter Contact

Literature distribution: "Lit drops"—are the most basic form of campaigning. Literature is placed in a secure area on the door of houses (NEVER in mail boxes!) in the areas or precincts you want to cover. **Leafleting**- this is similar to literature distribution, but the literature is distributed at public places like shopping centers or college campuses.

Visibility: Visibility activities are those activities that get the candidate's name out and raise the profile of the campaign.

Yard signs: yard signs are large posters on a stake or wire that are placed on a supporter's lawn.

Billboards: These are a very expensive way to minimally increase name identification and display your campaign slogan.

Human Billboards: This is often referred to as "sign waving." Volunteers and staff go to heavily traveled intersections and wave signs.

Email Blitz: Emailing all the Republicans in an area about issues and asking for support on a regular basis.

Examples of High-Intensity Voter Contact

Candidate Activity: The #1 most effective form of voter contact is the candidate asking a potential voter face to face for support.

Precinct Captains: The #2 most effective form of voter contact is his/her family members, friends or neighbors telling voters favorable things about the candidate.

Canvassing: One of the most effective forms of voter contact and campaigning for a volunteer is door-to-door canvassing or knocking of doors.

Phone Banking: In large geographical areas or during election crunch time when we do not have the ability to go door-to-door, phone banking allows us to make contact with voters more efficiently. While maintaining interactive contact, we can contact larger number of voters in shorter periods of time. However, this contact is less persuasive, and accurate phone numbers are not universally available.

PRECINCT BUILDING

What is precinct building?

Precinct building is the action of identifying, meeting, informing and tracking possible conservative voters in your precinct on a regular basis. This involves you finding out where like-minded people are living in your precinct and staying in touch with them on a regular basis either in person or by email or letter.

CANVASSING

Door-to-Door canvassing is a highly targeted technique that is extremely effective. Voters can really identify with a campaign if their neighbors or other individuals are on their doorsteps describing the candidate or issue directly to them.

Canvassing Kit

1. **Talking Points:** Depending on the timing of election cycles we might want to adjust our talking points to specific issues or candidates. MOPP will provide talking points, as the situation requires.
2. **Walk Lists and Maps:** Where possible, MOPP will provide information about the area for you to walk in. This might include specific information about the voters living in this area from past elections, including phone numbers.
3. **Literature/Brochure:** Literature might be provided depending on the situation.

5. **Door Hangers:** If no one answers the door or no one is home. And then call back later and refer to the note you left

Training Canvassers

If possible, we will hold training sessions in various places across the State. Usually, we try to talk as one of the speakers at political or volunteer functions/organizations. We will post those events on the calendar on this website.

Rules for the Canvassers

1. Be sure to wear comfortable shoes.
2. Look presentable when you go door-to-door.
3. If you walk in pairs, never lose sight of your partner.
4. Never go into someone's home. Just thank them and move on.
5. If someone has a question and you do not immediately know the answer, make a note and get back to them later with the answer.
6. Remember to record as much voter information as possible.
7. Never put literature in mailboxes or mail slots. It is actually against the law to do so. Use Rubber bands or tape to attach the material to the door handle.
8. **Never get into an argument with anyone. Say “Thank you for your time” and walk away.**
9. If you wish, you send any feedback back to MOPP in any form you wish.

In order to help you in your canvassing efforts, you can find different brochures and templates on this websites.

