



Evidence-Based Practices for Voter Mobilization

Research-Based Principles for Effective
Get-Out-the-Vote Activities

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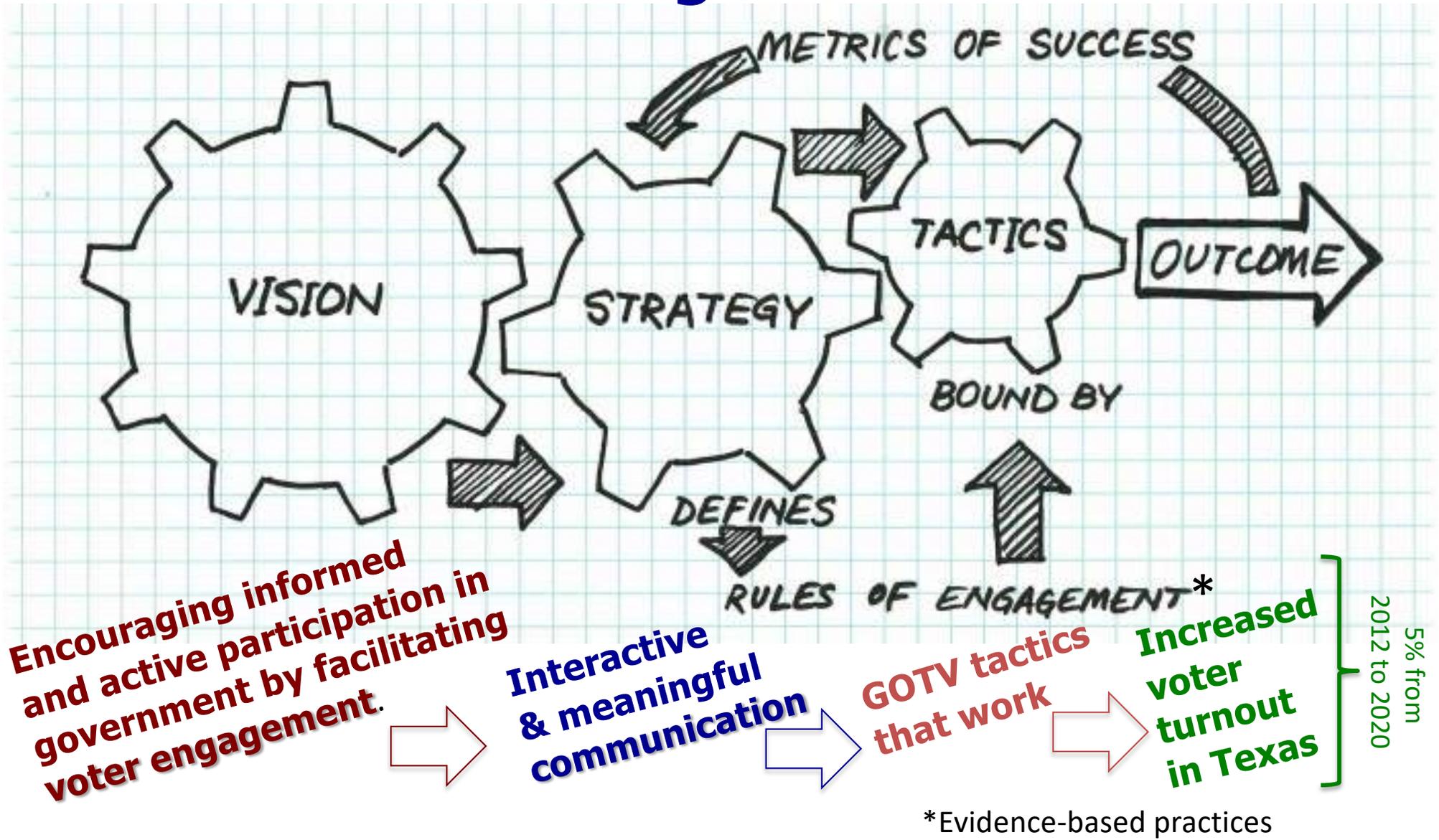


Preface

Welcome!

- This tutorial will help you understand the principles behind effective GOTV campaigns.
 - For what works, see *Tactics That Work for Voter Mobilization*
 - For talking effectively with voters, see:
What to Say: Effective GOTV Conversations
- Each election, each potential voter, and each get-out-the-vote (GOTV) effort is unique.
 - Thus it is critical to tailor your message.
 - Regardless of the type of GOTV activity and your audience, your efforts will be more effective if guided by evidence-based practices.
- GOTV action involves vision, strategy, and tactics as depicted on the next page.

GOTV Action Program



1. THE DOS & DON'TS OF VOTER MOBILIZATION



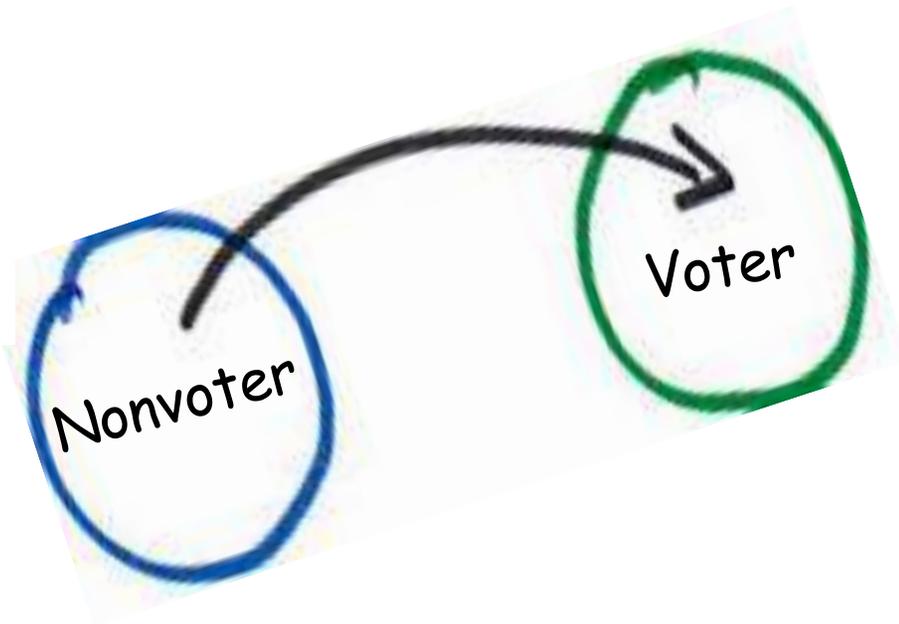
- Focus on voting
- Connect with the voter
- Use gentle social pressure
- Help make a plan for voting



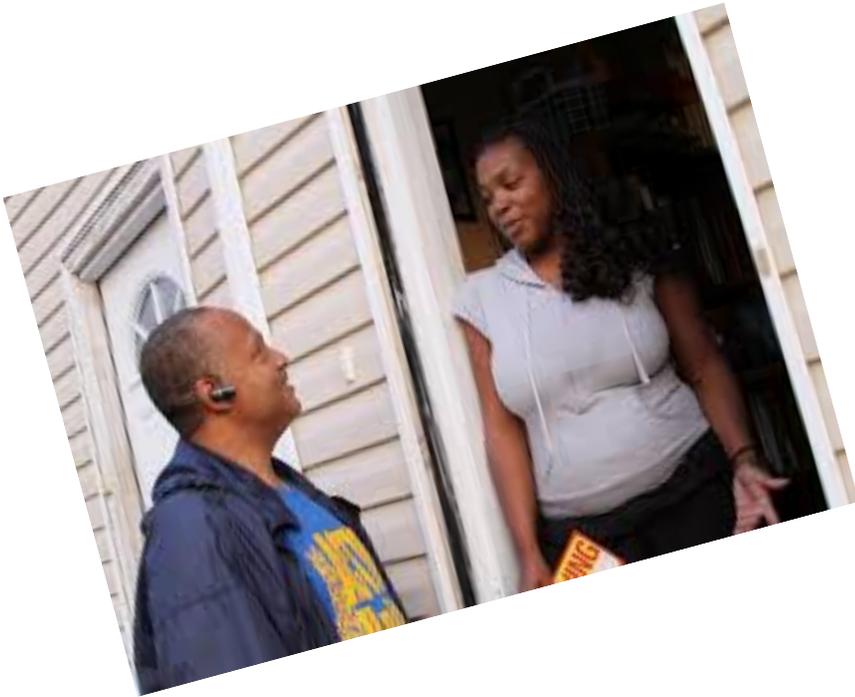
- Advocate for issues or candidates
- Discuss that people aren't voting
- Rely on impersonal emails, display ads, or robo-calls

Focus on voting

- The goal is to transform nonvoters into voters
 - not to change minds about an issue or a candidate.
- Advocating for issues may diminish your influence on voter turnout.
- The League does not support or oppose candidates or political parties



Connect with the voter



Messengers with something in common with the community are more effective than outsiders.

- Emphasize that you are local, e.g.:
 - A neighbor
 - From a local organization
- Acknowledge a commonality between you and your contact.
- Be enthusiastic.
- Ask questions.
- Share a voting story of your own.

Connect with the voter

Timing



- Use different periods of the election season to greatest effect.
- Focus messaging on a specific topic within the 2 weeks before its deadline:
 - Voter registration
 - Vote-by-mail applications
 - Early voting
 - Election Day

Connect with the voter

How often?



- Aim to make one contact with each targeted voter
 - through multiple attempts if needed.
- One successful contact with lots of voters is more effective than multiple contacts with fewer voters.
- Multiple contacts are most effective with occasional voters but require substantial resources.

Connect with the voter

Targeting the electorate



Target those who need a little encouragement to vote, especially:

- First-time voters
- Young people
- Ethnic/racial minorities
- People with a low income

Use gentle social pressure



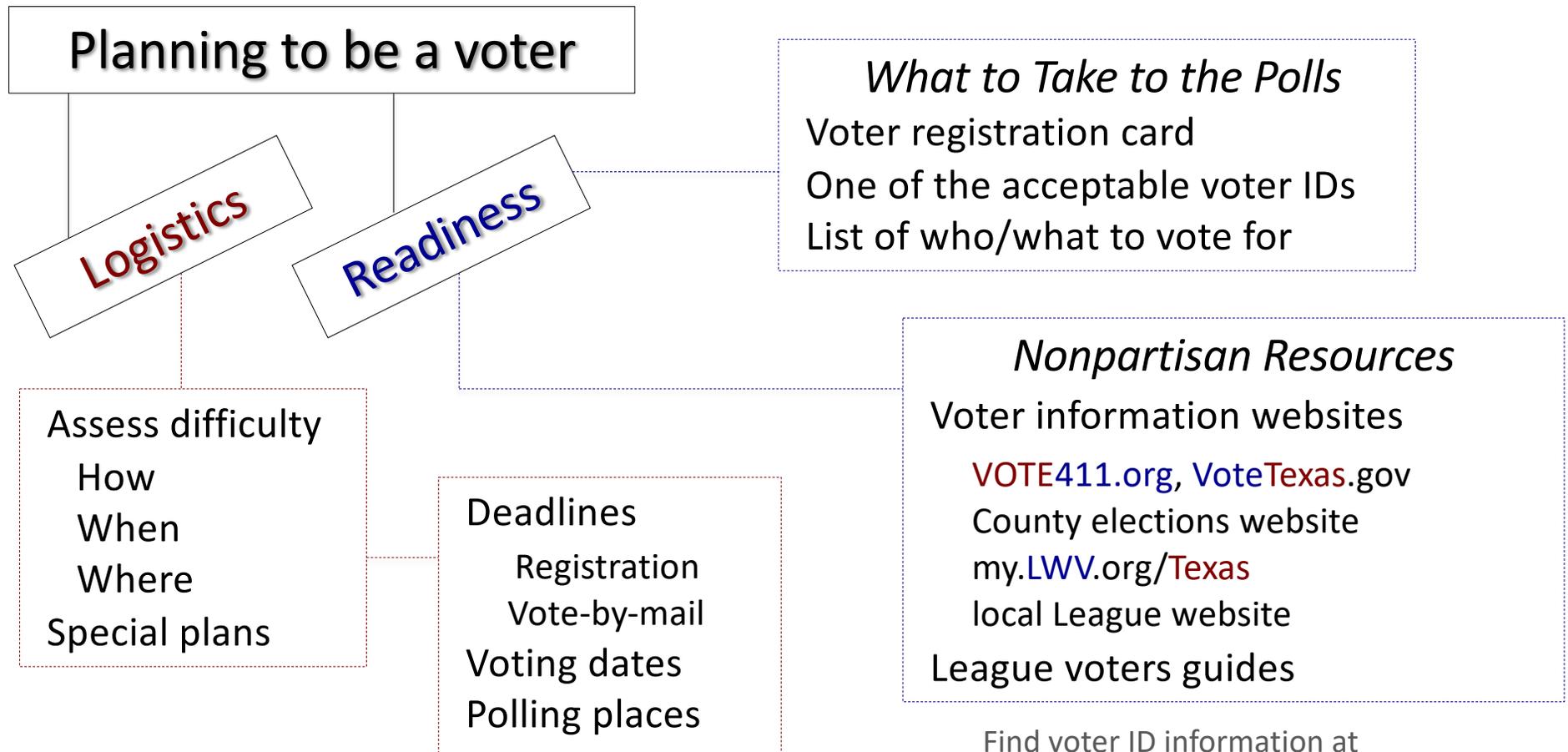
We are social creatures and want to fit in.

Let potential voters know that someone is paying attention to whether or not they participate in the election.

- Tell them that others like themselves have committed to being voters.
- Remind them of their past voting history (it's public record).
- Promise to follow-up with them after the election (and do so!).

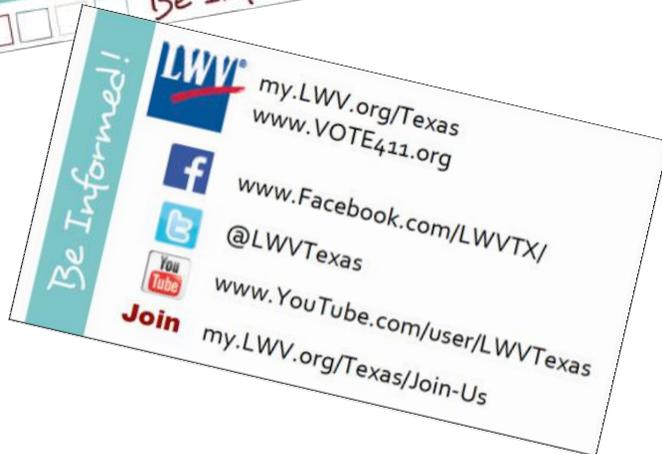
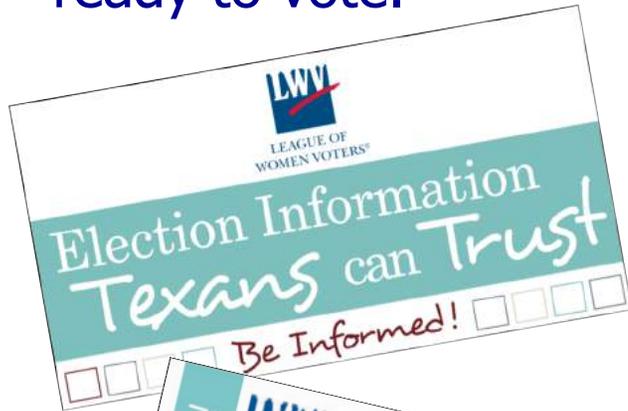
Help make a plan for voting

Getting potential voters to think through the steps they need to take makes them more likely to act on their intent to vote.

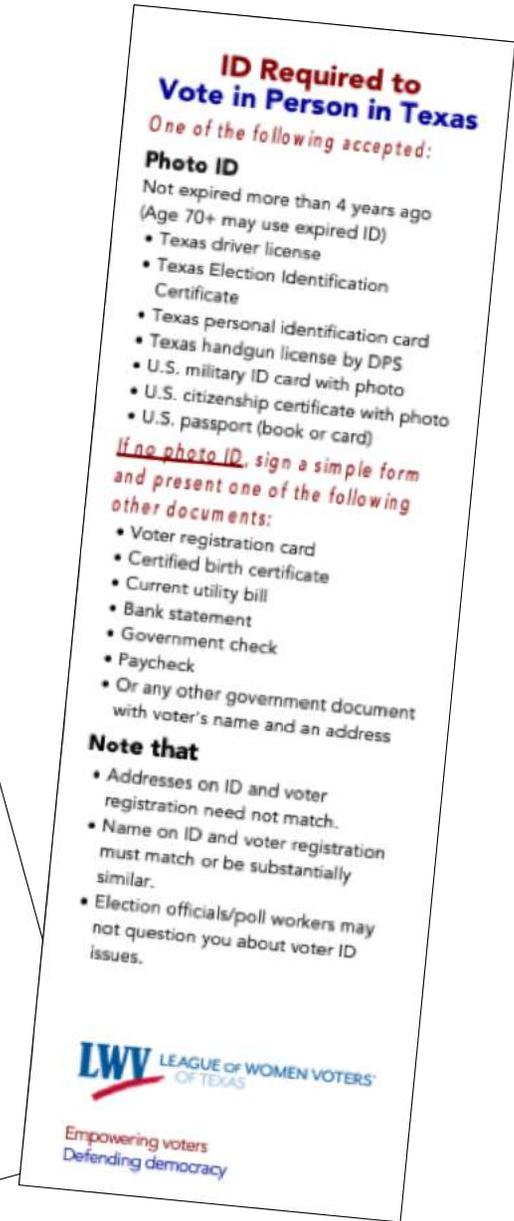


Help make a plan for voting

Assist voter in getting ready to vote.

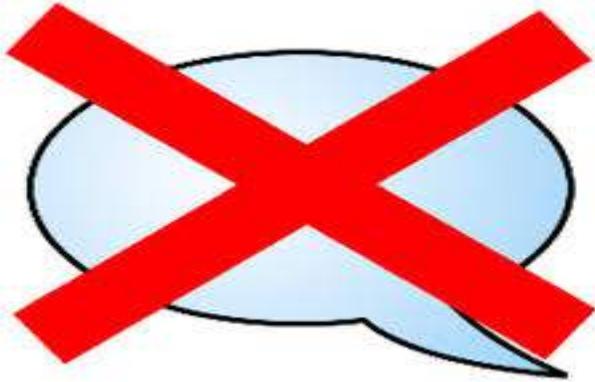


LWV-TX social media business card available at <https://my.lwv.org/texas/get-out-vote-0>



Bookmarks individualized for each local League available at <https://my.LWV.org/Texas/vote-it-counts>

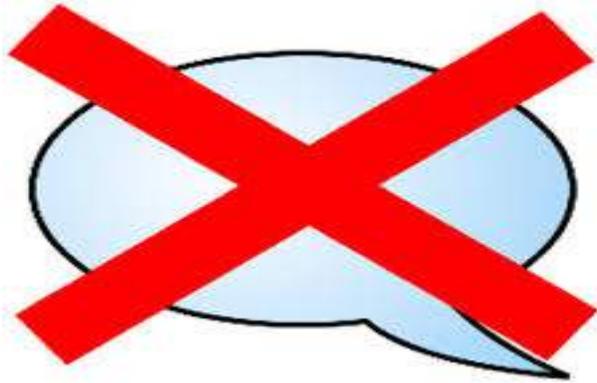




Don't talk about ...

- how people aren't voting
- low voter turnout

- Hearing that others are voting encourages voting among infrequent and occasional voters.
 - Your [classmates, neighbors, etc.] have been telling me that they are definitely voting in this election. Do you plan on being a voter?
 - We're expecting a high turnout this election.
 - More and more people are voting.
- Telling people that others are not voting can suppress voter turnout.



Don't advocate voting for...

- Issues or
- Candidates

- The single most important element of voter mobilization is urging the person to be a voter.
 - How important is it for you to be a voter in this upcoming election?
 - Can I count on you being a voter in this election?
- Persuasion messages have no effect on whether or not a person will vote!
 - An issue-focused message is unlikely to increase voter turnout.
 - The League does not endorse or oppose any candidate or political party.



Rely on
impersonal

Robocalls

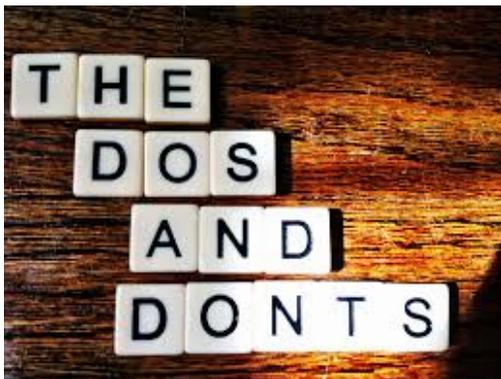
Mass emails

Display ads



- Impersonal mass communication is ineffective in increasing voter turnout.
- But friend-to-friend personalized communication that encourages voting through a series of chatty posts is about as effective as face-to-face canvassing.

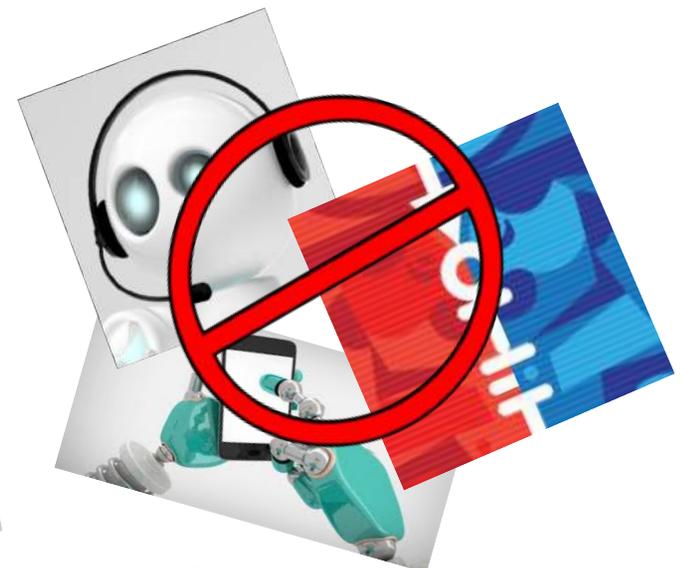
Let's
Recap



Don't advocate for issues or candidates



Use gentle social pressure



Don't rely on impersonal communication

2. MOBILIZING VOTERS IS NOT...

"... merely a matter of reminding them that Election Day is near.

... just a matter of putting election-related information in front of them.

... telling people why they should vote for a particular candidate or cause...."



3. TO MOBILIZE VOTERS...

- ✓ Make them feel wanted at the polls.

In-person invitations convey the most warmth and work best. Next best are personalized telephone calls or personalized chatty posts on social media.

- ✓ Build on voters' preexisting level of motivation to vote.
- ✓ Let them know that their vote is a matter of public record.



4. VOTER MOBILIZATION RESOURCES



- Tactics That Work
- What to Say
- Engaging Target Populations
 - Asian and Pacific Islanders
 - Latinos
 - Millennials
 - Generation Z
 - Youth

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