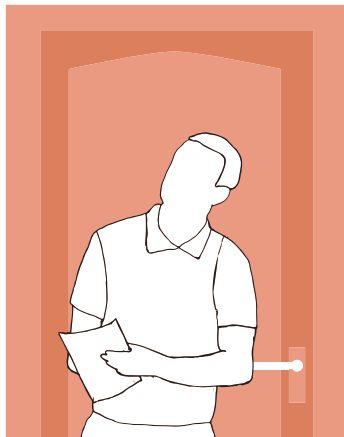


FOUR DOORS TO SUCCESSFUL DOOR-KNOCKING

There are many ways to build a base and develop relationships in your community. Sometimes there is just no substitute for door-knocking. While a lot of strategies depends upon people coming to you, door-knocking is unique in that it takes you to where people are.



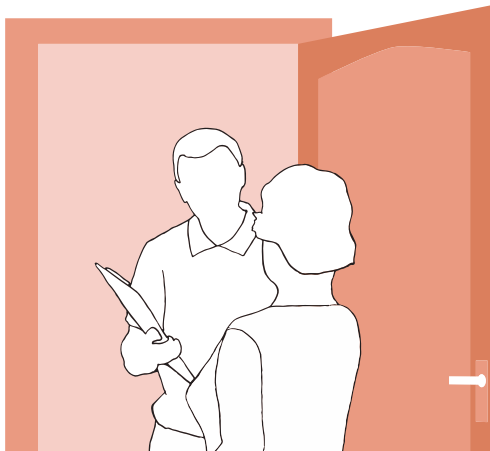
1. Preparation: Before You Go

- Be clear on your goals.
- Make sure you have all the information you need.
- Think of what questions people might ask, concerns they might raise, and how you will answer them.
- Other considerations- physical appearance, organization, safety, language, having your route planned out.



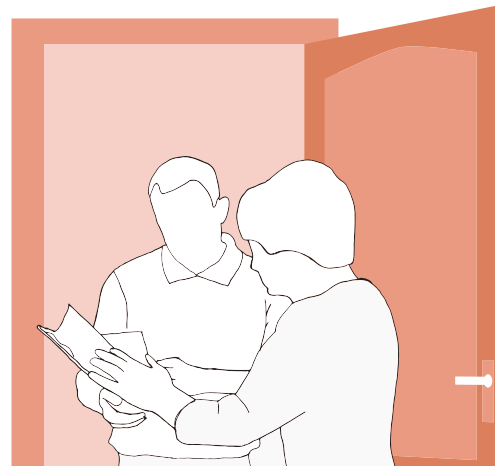
2. Introduction: Legitimizing yourself & Building Trust

- Introduce yourself and your organization.
- Share who you're talking to and who's involved.
- Share a victory your organization has achieved that may be relevant to the conversation.
- Briefly share your purpose for being there today.



3. Conversation: Ask good questions & Listen

- Assume the best in people- part of building trust is trusting them too.
- Identify commonalities- where you live, kids, connection to a community space or issue, etc.
- Ask open ended questions that encourage people to share. Try and avoid asking only Yes-No questions.
- Affirm that you are your organization care about the things they are saying.



4. Commitment: Give them an opportunity to be involved

- Sign a petition.
- Attend a meeting.
- Talk to their neighbors.
- Provide you their contact information.

Project Confidence

Your mood, confidence and wellness shows when interacting with others. Make sure that you are dressed appropriately for the weather and to make a good impression. Be well organized- using clipboards or folders for any information you want to pass out or reference. Be clear and concise with your message. Try not to over complicate things and be honest about what you don't know. Be mindful of your body language, posture and gestures. Try and shake out any nerves you may have before you start, but sometimes it's understandable to be nervous doing something new. With more practice comes more confidence! Don't spend time apologizing for coming or taking their time. It is important that you don't see your presence as being bothersome; instead you are giving them an opportunity to be involved in changing things for the better. Believe in what you are doing!

Adapt to the circumstances

No two doors will give you the exact same result- so it is critical to adapt! Plan on having a "huddle-up" at the end of the block or apartment floor to reflect on how your presentation, conversations and commitments are going. Make the necessary changes to make the next block or floor more effective. Be sure to have information to leave behind in case someone isn't home, or make a record of who you need to go back to. If someone comes to the door but doesn't have time to talk, ask when would be a better time. You will encounter a number of different moods and personalities- enthusiastic, shy, upset, and curious. So be ready to adapt to fit each experience.

Wield Tension Positively

Sometimes tension is unavoidable in doorknocking. The truth is people maybe bothered or suspicious about you coming to your door. You might even wake a couple people up accidentally. Don't worry, it happens! Another source of tension is that the questions you ask may bring out things that are difficult to talk about- such as experiences with racism or injustice. It may be that you are the first person in their life who has asked them what they care about. You might feel tension when people open up about the issues they are facing but hesitate to make a commitment. Tension is not bad. Tension is the energy that moves us from where we are to where we want to be. If people seem upset, name it and ask them why. If people give you excuses for not committing- you can challenge them in a respectful way.

Following Up

Take note of any commitments you made to them, and send them any information you promised in a timely manner. Also, check back with them on commitments they made.