

# DVC FOR WOMEN

## Election Strategies for Women in Aotearoa

By Sarah Kerby



*“It’s literally knocking on this derelict house in the bad side of Ngāruawāhia with a solo mum and seven kids with no food and its cold, and we’ve got the Winter Energy Payment that we could get in, if we are successful.*

*To be able to talk to people to get their sense of what’s going on, and to put that through the Party to be able to communicate, was something that made me feel very good.”*

## INTRODUCTION

**This handbook has been developed to help women candidates in Aotearoa New Zealand use Direct Voter Contact strategies to support their election campaigns. One of the most effective things people seeking election can do is to talk directly to voters. In organising terms, this is known as Direct Voter Contact (DVC).**

Effective DVC campaigns help to build relationships between candidates/political parties, and the people they would like to vote for them. These conversations also help candidates/political parties know which issues are most important to their communities, gain insights for policy development, and gather contact details to grow their support base.

This handbook provides a guide for women candidates to add an effective Direct Voter Contact strategy to their election campaigns. This handbook focuses on ways to communicate with voters in the months and weeks leading up to an election. However, community outreach and voter engagement can (and should) continue at all parts of an election cycle. A brief overview of DVC strategies outside an election year is provided at the end of this handbook.





## TYPES OF VOTERS

	SUPPORTERS	SWING VOTERS	OPPOSITION SUPPORTERS
Always Vote	1	2	DNC*
Sometimes Vote	3	3	DNC
Never Vote	DNC	DNC	DNC

Figure 1. Table showing which campaign phase to contact which type of voter \* (n.b DNC means Do Not Contact)

Direct Voter Contact has two main goals:

- Mobilising your supporters
- Winning the support of undecided or persuadable voters

**Supporters** are people who are part of a demographic that strongly support you, or who live in areas shown to be strongly supportive. They are going to vote for you, and are not going to change their minds before voting opens.

**Swing Voters** are people who are part of a demographic that are interested in you, or who live in areas shown to have some support for you. They have not yet made up their minds who to vote for, and may be persuadable through Direct Voter Contact.

**Opposition Supporters** are people who are part of a demographic that does not support you, or live in areas that are not supportive. They are going to vote for the opposition and will not change their minds before voting opens.

**Never Vote** are people who do not vote at all, so do not contact them\*.

\*An exception is when there are unique circumstances that might motivate your supporters to vote. For example, issues like the 2020 Cannabis referendum can motivate people to go and vote – certainly reach out to them if you have available resource.

## CAMPAIGN OVERVIEW

A good Direct Voter Contact campaign is separated into three phases: recruitment, persuasion, and mobilisation.

### Phase 1. Recruitment (Build the Base)

The Recruitment phase of the campaign builds our base of volunteers so we can build capacity for the rest of the campaign and engage with as many voters as possible. This phase also helps us escalate people into leadership roles.

This phase is focused on contacting volunteer leads, and encouraging them to come along to Direct Voter Contact events. Volunteer leads can come from data from previous campaigns, market stalls, Robopoll data, social media, and through social networks. Volunteers will do phone and door canvassing to targeted supporters, with the aim of recruiting volunteers and gathering contact details. It's important to store this information in a central database to prepare for future phases and future campaigns.

During the Recruitment phase, it's important to escalate volunteers into leadership roles to continue to grow volunteer capacity. This team of volunteer leaders can lead their own DVC events and recruit more people, to ensure there is enough volunteer resource to cover the final campaign phases.

### Phase 2. Persuasion (Win the Vote)

The Persuasion phase of the campaign engages with undecided voters, and convinces them to vote for you based on issues they care about.

This phase is focused on contacting undecided/swing voters. Volunteers can use personal story and key campaign issues to connect with the people they speak to and encourage them to vote. Voter contact is focused on quality conversations about issues that are important to the voter. Volunteers should be trained in persuasion techniques, referring to scripts and key lines as needed.

***PRO TIP:** Volunteer Recruitment targets are usually friendly and happy to hear from you: a great way for new or nervous volunteers to gain experience on the doors and phones!*

Persuasion targets come from the data collected in the first phase of the campaign, data from previous campaigns, Robopoll responses, and local knowledge.

Volunteer recruitment should continue through this part of the campaign. Volunteer leaders should be leading most of the DVC events during this phase.

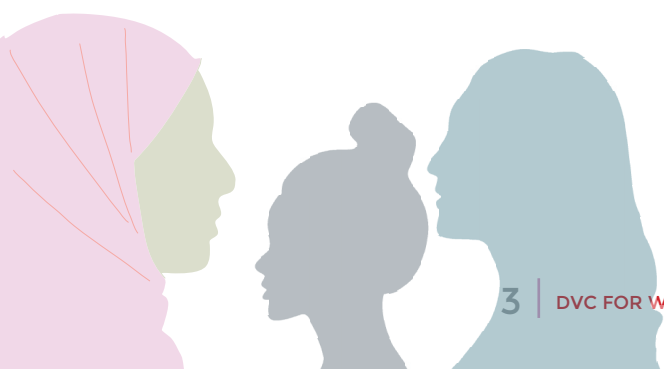
### **Phase 3. Mobilisation (Get out the Vote)**

The mobilisation phase of the campaign encourages supporters to enrol and vote, and to vote early. This phase focuses on known (and predicted) supporters that 'sometimes vote'.

Voters are encouraged to go and vote early, and volunteers can let them know the closest polling booth or post box. New voters can be encouraged to enrol and vote at the same time. Voter outreach during this phase is crucial to ensure that supporters are motivated to go and cast their vote.

Mobilisation targets come from data collected in previous phases of the campaign, and local knowledge. Some campaigns may have access to voter turnout history which can provide specific voter targets. By Election Day or the end of the voting period, these campaigns should have clear data telling them which of their supporters haven't voted yet.

While voting is open, there should be a large number of volunteers calling and doorknocking supporters to remind them to vote. Election Day should be a final push to encourage voter turnout, but targets should have already been contacted.



## EXAMPLE SCRIPTS

These scripts provide a general structure of effective conversations.

The most important thing is that people have a positive interaction. Don't ask if 'now is a good time to talk', they'll always say no. You can reassure them that you're just after a quick chat to find out their feedback on issues, and you're not asking for money.

If they are too busy to talk at all, apologise and leave them to it. They'll still remember that you made the effort to reach out, but they'll remember that you weren't annoying.

Do encourage skilled volunteers to go off script and have natural conversations. Some people will love to chat about their garden and that's a great way to build rapport.

*"Someone I called didn't want to talk as he was watching the rugby. I quickly apologised and asked him for the score. He gladly told me, and I left him to it. He ran into the candidate a few weeks later and told her how great the call was. He said he could tell the caller was genuine and wasn't reading from a script. I don't know anything about rugby"*

### Example Script: Volunteer Recruitment

Kia ora, am I speaking with *target name*?

My name is *volunteer name* and I'm a volunteer for *candidate and political party*.  
How are you today?

*Candidate* has asked me to give you a ring and find out if you have any issues or concerns at the moment, and what's important to you coming up to the election?

(IF NO ISSUES – prompt them. "Lots of people are talking about housing and transport here in Nelson. Do any of those things particularly concern you?")

(Build rapport, share your story, connect their issue back to the candidate's values)

If there was an election held tomorrow, would you support this candidate / do you know which party you would support?

IF IDENTIFIED AS A SUPPORTER –

Would you be interested in getting involved with the campaign? Can you come to this doorknock/phonebank/help out another way?

Do you have an email address or mobile number we can use to let you know about the events we have coming up?

Thank you heaps – have a great day!

## Example Script: Persuasion

Kia ora, am I speaking with *target name*?

My name is *volunteer name* and I'm a volunteer for *candidate and political party*.  
How are you today?

*Candidate* has asked me to give you a ring and find out if you have any issues or concerns at the moment, and what's important to you coming up to the election?

(IF NO ISSUES – prompt them. “Lots of people are talking about housing and transport here in Nelson. Do any of those things particularly concern you?”)

Yeah, I hear what you're saying. Share your personal story. I'm supporting *candidate* because they have this great idea that would help to fix that/have already done this thing to help make that better.

Pivot to your *candidate/Party's* achievements – link in with your own values or a shared experience with the caller. Refer to campaign messages. Explain how their issue will play out if the candidate is not elected.

Can *candidate* count on your vote this election?

Are you normally a party supporter?\*(If running with party support).

Do you have an email address or mobile number we can use to let you know about our upcoming events?

Thank you for your time – have a great day!

\*IF IDENTIFIED AS A STRONG SUPPORTER, INCLUDE –

Would you be interested in getting involved with the campaign? Can you come to this phonebank/doorknock/event?

## Example Script: Mobilisation

Kia ora, am I speaking with *target name*?

My name is *name* and I'm a volunteer calling on behalf of *candidate/Party*. How are you today?

I'm just giving you a ring to see if you need help finding a voting booth, or getting to one. Do you know where you can go to vote?

Later in the day - I'm just checking in to see if you've had a chance to vote yet?

The polls close at 7pm. Do you, or anyone else at your house need help getting to a voting booth? Thank you – have a great day!



## TYPES OF DIRECT VOTER CONTACT

Direct Voter Contact is the techniques and activities used to communicate to voters, persuade them to vote for you, and mobilise them to go and vote. Direct Voter Contact can be a range of techniques, from doorknocking to constituent clinics, to stalls at community events.

The type of DVC you use for your campaign will depend on a number of factors, such as:

- Which activities are legally and culturally appropriate
- The amount of people you are trying to reach
- Whether your campaign is rural or urban, and how closely people live to one another
- How the public feel about the candidate/party
- The campaign's financial and human resource capacity
- The security environment
- COVID-19 restrictions

The impact of a voter contact interaction will depend on the local political and cultural environment and the target audience you are trying to reach.

Effective interactions leave a lasting impression on the voter. They will be thinking about it hours later, and they will talk to friends and family about the interaction. The more personal the approach, the more effective it tends to be. These approaches also give voters the chance to engage in two way conversations. Personal approaches tend to be cost effective, but do require much more time and people to organise and implement. Examples of effective interactions are doorknocking, phone banking, and street corner meetings.

Ineffective interactions are forgotten about quickly, and leave no impression on the people you are trying to reach. Examples of ineffective interactions are hoardings (billboards), leaflets/fliers, and sign waving. Good campaigns will use some of these techniques to support and reinforce their other strategies. An example is hoardings: if every other candidate has a hoarding it would look strange if you didn't, and it may help people you doorknock to remember you. However, a good hoarding on its own is not likely to win you any votes.

## EFFECTIVENESS OF DIRECT VOTER CONTACT STRATEGIES

Direct Voter Contact in every form requires resources and time from the campaign. Some techniques require more money, and some require more time and volunteer resource. It's important to make sure your DVC strategies are making a good impact compared to the resources they require.

The chart below uses a scale of 1-5, with 1 being lowest and 5 being highest, to rate common Direct Voter Contact strategies according to the following criteria:

- Financial Cost - How much will it cost?
- Volunteer Resource – How much volunteer capacity do we need?
- Time & Planning – How much time will we need to plan and run this?
- Impact – How effective will this strategy be for the people we want to reach?
- Efficiency – How many people will this reach at one time?

*Money and Time are common barriers for women candidates. An effective DVC strategy can result in a low-cost, volunteer-led campaign that supports women candidates to stand for election.*

METHOD	FINANCIAL COST	VOLUNTEERS	TIME & PLANNING	IMPACT	EFFICIENCY
Doorknocking	1	5	3	5	3
Phone Banking	1	5	3	3	4
Small Personal Events	2	2	4	4	2
Large Personal Events	2	3	5	3	5
Leaflets	5	5	5	1	5
Hoardings	5	5	5	1	5
Sign waving	1	4	2	1	4

Your campaign should use the Direct Voter Contact methods that best suit your goals, and the political environment. Voters may not appreciate being door knocked during a virus outbreak, but might value a friendly phone call during lockdowns. All of these DVC methods will require campaign resources, so consider ways that you can fundraise or recruit enough help.

## DIRECT VOTER CONTACT CAMPAIGN ROLES

Direct Voter Contact is usually heavily reliant on the capacity of your volunteers. Be sure to distribute big leadership roles among the campaign team, so volunteers are not overwhelmed or burn out. Your team should always be on the lookout for new talent to escalate into leadership roles and increase your capacity. Don't be afraid to create or adapt a role for a specific volunteer, especially if they have valuable skills. Remember to invest your volunteer resource on the DVC strategies that are the most effective.

This section describes common campaign roles that specifically relate to Direct Voter Contact – there may be other roles in the campaign.

### **Local Campaign Manager**

Reports to the candidate, and must be free to coordinate aspects of the campaign beyond DVC (such as fundraising, communications, and hoardings). Campaign Managers coordinate the overall campaign, but leave DVC organising to the Field team to cover.

### **DVC Coordinator or Field Organiser (if through a Party)**

Reports to the Campaign Manager or Field Director. They are responsible for overseeing and implementing the DVC strategy including doorknocking, phoning, markets, and events. Their major focus is volunteer recruitment, and training and supporting volunteers to lead their own DVC events.

### **DVC Volunteer Leaders**

Report to the DVC Coordinator or Field Organiser. These people will usually be a leader within their community, with a wide range of networks and organising experience. They should be enthusiastic, positive, determined, reliable, and well-organised. Experience is an advantage in this role, but emerging talents can be supported by the DVC Coordinator or Field Organiser.

Their job is to organise and run local DVC events, like door knocks or markets, and arrange for volunteers to attend. This role is also responsible for volunteer recruitment,

*“I love doorknocking. I love phone calling. I credit my successful campaign, well actually a couple of our campaigns, to being very active with DVC. Other left candidates thought there were other methods of campaigning that worked better. I was a strong believer in DVC being the way to go, and implemented those strategies and we won, the others didn't.”*

*“It's speaking directly – it's that kanohi ki te kanohi – face to face. A lot of this stuff is very cyclical, new tools come in, people get excited about them, but underlying everything is relationships, it's just about rebuilding relationships with your community.”*

and identifying new volunteer leaders. They must have specific roles, such as being responsible for a market or phone bank at the same time each week.

## **DVC Volunteers**

The most important part of any movement. DVC Volunteers report to their Volunteer Leader. These volunteers will be focused on list building and Direct Voter Contact like door knocking, phone banking, and other campaign events.

### **Extra Roles That Can Be Helpful:**

#### **Delivery Coordinator**

This person reports to the Campaign Manager, and coordinates the volunteers that do leaflet deliveries.

During volunteer recruitment a lot of people that don't want to door knock or make phone calls will offer to deliver leaflets. The DVC team can pass these volunteers' details to the Delivery Coordinator, but should not organise or recruit these volunteers themselves.

#### **Data Entry Volunteers**

These people work with the DVC team to assist with data entry. They can help reduce the workload of the DVC team by inputting data (such as door knock sheets) into a central system. These roles are good for tech-savvy volunteers who would prefer to help in their own time. Remember to ensure paper data sheets are returned and destroyed once processed.

#### **Food Helpers**

These people assist the campaign by preparing food for volunteers. People can help by dropping off lunch or snacks for door knock and phone teams, or inviting volunteers for a meal after a DVC event.

#### **Childcare Volunteers**

These people assist the campaign by providing childcare for DVC teams. An informal 'crèche' for candidates' and volunteers' children could be set up in the campaign office during a DVC event, or at a house or venue nearby. It's particularly important to ensure that these volunteers are trusted, and well-known to the rest of the campaign team. Ensure childcare volunteers have parent's contact details and experience looking after children.

*"DVC is all about setting context, and putting people alongside people, saying we are you as well, we are from your community and we care about these things. We know not everyone is going to go and knock on doors, but we're knocking on yours today because we know that what you have to say and think is important. It's allowing people to have a say."*

*"Direct Voter Contact -It's just good stuff"*

## **Tikanga and Cultural Support Volunteers**

These people assist the candidate and campaign by providing advice on cultural requirements for your campaign. These volunteers are particularly important in a campaign with a diverse ethnic demographic. They can give advice on worldviews, protocol, clothing for ethnic events, and language for greetings and acknowledgements.

All campaigns in Aotearoa New Zealand should honour the values of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

## LIST BUILDS AND HOW TO GATHER DATA

List Builds are ways to gather contact details and other voter data that you can use during a campaign. The more data you can gather before a campaign, the more effective your targeting will be at election time.

There are a range of ways to get contact details for people who are supportive of you and your values. Be sure to let them know why you are asking for their contact information: to invite them to other events, add them to a mailing list, or contact them about volunteering (or all of the above). You can include this in the conversation or add a disclaimer statement to a registration sheet or petition. Be sure to keep their contact details secure and private, and don't share them with any other group.

*Example conversation to ask for contact details:*

*"We have a really great event coming up for our supporters. Would you like me to add you to our mailing list and send you through the event details? What's your email address?"*

### 1. Events

Attending community events like market stalls and fairs is brilliant for your visibility, and gives you an opportunity to build up contact lists of supporters. People move between elections and don't have landlines anymore, so it's important we can get in touch with people who want to hear from us.

When you attend an event like a market stall or O-Week, take a petition or survey for people to fill out. Competitions such as 'guess the number of lollies in the jar' are great ways to get contact details too. When you host a public event like a street corner meeting or with a guest speaker, make sure your attendees register on a sign-up sheet.

### 2. Issues Campaigns

An issues campaign is an organised effort to educate the community about your issue, and mobilise them to support your position. You can go door to door with a petition, organise a protest, and present your issue in the media.

Good issues campaigns represent the public's mood, and use arguments that will sway them to support you. You can find out about common issues by doorknocking, phone calling, Robopolling, or through media analysis. Examples of campaigns could be lobbying against a community venue closure, or lobbying a Council for more investment in public transport. Remember to be sure you aren't protesting against yourself, or against the Party you are representing.

Make sure you always have an 'action' for your supporters and get their contact details to keep them up to date. You can get these from your petition, or from a sign-up sheet at an event (remember your disclaimer statements).

### **3. Doorknocking**

If you meet supportive or undecided voters while doorknocking, ask them for their mobile phone number and email address so you can keep in touch. Add this to your central system to use later in the campaign.

### **4. Phone Calling**

If you speak to supportive or undecided voters while phone banking, ask them for their mobile phone number and email address so you can keep in touch. Add this to your central system to use later in the campaign.



# VOLUNTEERS

## How to Find Volunteer Leads

Be direct when asking people for support and be clear what you are asking them to do. Let people know you understand they are busy, but would appreciate the help they can offer. Don't be afraid to ask volunteers to help – volunteers enjoy campaigning and there are many benefits for them too.

Make personal, individual asks, rather than a mass email or social media update to do your recruiting for you. You can target the type of volunteers you want for specific roles, such as asking a supportive builder to spend a day putting up hoardings.

- Ask friends and family to help
- Target supporters on the doors and phones
- Ask organisations that share your values, such as unions or student groups
- Run stalls at events like markets or O-Week
- Run issues campaigns, protests, and petitions
- Make personal asks over social media

*“Volunteering on a campaign was super enjoyable and one of the best experiences of my life because it was so full on, and it gave me a real purpose.”*

*“Campaigning was a really empowering thing for me to be involved with. You get to meet people in your community, and form bonds with people you might not normally have run into.”*

## How to Show Volunteers Appreciation

- Always acknowledge your team as contributing to your success
- Share positive feedback you receive about your volunteers
- Offer top volunteers 1:1 time with the candidate, such as coffee
- Provide food at your DVC events
- Give out a prize (like a chocolate fish!) to the top caller or doorknocker of an event
- Give them campaign merchandise like t-shirts or rosettes
- Host regular social events for volunteers only, like bowling or BBQs
- Ask someone high profile to send through a short 'thank you' video and broadcast this at a social event
- Send personal 'thank you' notes, congratulatory messages, and Christmas cards



- Display fun photos of your volunteers at events on the wall of your campaign HQ
- Host a victory party for your team after your campaign
- Organise certificates for key volunteers and present these at an award ceremony
- Gift professional advice – provide job references and mentoring for younger volunteers
- Hire your best volunteers – they'll make your best workers!

## Volunteer Wellbeing

Volunteering usually contributes to positive well-being, characterised by increased happiness and higher levels of life satisfaction. Volunteering for political campaigns can be a brilliant way for people to create change on the issues they care about, while making new friends and learning new skills. Good training, opportunities, and support is key to a positive volunteer experience.

However, sometimes there can be issues where volunteer wellbeing is impacted in a negative way. Ensure your campaign has processes for volunteers when things go wrong, and ensure volunteers know where to find information about who to contact in those situations.

Below are some common issues volunteers may face, and how to support them:

1. **Difficult Conversations.** Sometimes your volunteers will discuss incredibly difficult topics on the doors, and may even find themselves acting as counsellors. Be sure to check in and debrief with your volunteers afterwards, and involve their parents if your volunteers are minors.
2. **Difficult Volunteers.** It's OK to let a volunteer know you do not want them in your team. Reassign them to another part of the campaign, or ask them not to come to future events. If you are connected to a Party campaign, you can escalate this if necessary.
3. **Very Difficult Volunteers.** Involve the Police. If you are connected to a Party campaign, you can escalate this to them for support too.
4. **Volunteer Burn Out.** Sometimes your volunteers will have too much going on. It's OK to send them home for a break and ask them not to come to DVC events until they have had some rest.
5. **Volunteers Going Rogue.** If your volunteers aren't following campaign messaging or are acting inappropriately, raise the issue with them in a one to one meeting and be clear of your expectations. You can also offer them extra training.

## DVC EVENTS:

### How to Run a Great Door Knock

Your volunteers could be door knocking to find volunteers, persuade undecided voters, or encourage people to go and vote. They could also door knock to find out about local issues, run petitions and gather contact details.

#### Before a Door Knock:

Good doorknocking locations are easy to find and get to, suitable for volunteers' physical abilities, and have a lot of targets in a small area. Choose a time that suits your volunteers' availability, when your targets are also likely to be home. You could meet at an open space like a park or café, someone's home, or a campaign office.

***PRO TIP:** School Holidays are prime time for mid-week doorknocking as lots of people are home!*

Call your volunteers and ask them to come to the event, and encourage them to bring their friends and family along too. Remind them to dress for the weather, and wear footwear suitable for walking. Text or call them again the day before the event to remind them to come. If volunteers will be travelling a long way, offer them petrol vouchers before the event.

Once you know how many people to expect at your event, you can prepare your materials as below:

- Lists of voter targets and/or maps for each volunteer (or access to campaign database)
- Door knock packs (clipboard, pen, voter enrolment forms, organiser contact details, brochures)
- Messaging scripts and other training materials
- Volunteer sign-in sheet, with details of the next event
- T-shirts, rosettes, lanyards, or other identifying merchandise
- Sunblock, water, first aid kit, and other Health and Safety gear as appropriate

It's important to look after your volunteers and keep these events fun; consider keeping door knock events to around two hours. Meeting at a pub or café in your door knocking area is a great way to debrief, and let other people see that your team was active in the area. Super keen volunteers can go back out again afterwards!

## **During a Door Knock:**

Begin your doorknock with an upbeat briefing. Introduce yourself, do a round of introductions for your volunteers, and ensure everyone has signed in. Let everyone know the purpose of the door knock (e.g 'persuasion'), and the types of people you are targeting that day (e.g undecided voters, who may be challenging). If you have volunteers who may be particularly vulnerable (such as young volunteers, first timers, or hijabi women) see if they would prefer to visit supportive targets.

Discuss key campaign messages, the contents of their door knock packs, and Health and Safety. Make sure everyone knows when the doorknock is ending, where to meet afterwards, and who to contact if they need help or need to leave early. Skilled and experienced doorknockers can head out on the doors after this briefing.

First time or newer volunteers should stay with the door knock organiser for further training before heading out on the doors. Training for first time or new volunteers should include training on story, messaging, and conversation strategies. Training should also include practise conversations, and real-life examples of experiences on the doors. New volunteers should be paired up and do doors together until they are comfortable by themselves, and know who to contact if there are any issues.

Volunteers do not need to have policies memorised in detail, but should be comfortable building a connection with voters over shared values.

## **After a Door Knock**

Check in on your volunteers and debrief – this is a great time to provide some kai or coffee. You can do a group debrief like 'Pit and Peak' (best part of the event, worst part of the event) so everyone can share their stories of the day. You can also ask your volunteers about anything that needs to be followed up, and debrief individually after particularly challenging experiences.

Congratulate your volunteers and share the number of doors you knocked on at the event – this is incredibly motivating and rewarding. Let everyone know when the next door knock will be, and ask them all to sign up for another event.

Pack up all your gear, and process all of the data collected from the event.

## **Health & Safety – Door Knock Events**

Weather – Consider having a Plan B in adverse conditions. Light showers in summer may be fine to continue doorknocking, but during winter you may prefer to reschedule or switch to a phone bank.

Clothing – Ensure all volunteers have footwear suitable for walking, and clothing suitable for outdoor conditions.

Gates – Volunteers should rattle all gates before entering a property in case there is a dog. If there is a dog at the property, do not enter. Gates should be left as they were found.

- Unsafe Houses – If volunteers feel unsafe at a property, or cannot see a clear entry and exit, they should not visit the house. Don't go inside people's houses unless you know them.
- Aggressive People – Ensure volunteers know not to engage, and to leave the situation as soon as possible. Record the interaction so people know not to contact them again.
- Whereabouts – Volunteers should always be paired up, even if they want to door knock by themselves. Another volunteer should always know which house you are at – you could do opposite sides of the street, or visit neighbouring houses at the same time. At least one person from each pair should have a charged mobile phone.
- COVID-19 – Door knock with caution during a COVID-19 outbreak. Consider only allowing volunteers with a My Vaccine Pass to doorknock during this time, and wear masks.

## How to Run a Great Phone Bank

Your volunteers could be phoning to find volunteers, persuade undecided voters, or encourage people to go and vote. They could also phone around to find out about local issues, run petitions, and gather contact details.

### Before a Phone Bank

Good phone banking locations are easy to find and get to, have good Wifi access, and enough space for people to have many conversations at the same time.

Choose a time that suits your volunteers' availability, when your targets are also likely to be home. You could meet at a campaign office, someone's home/office, or a venue like a community hall.

Call your volunteers and ask them to come to the event, and encourage them to bring their friends and family along too. Ask them to bring their own laptop/tablet, charged phone, and headphones if they have them. Text or call them again the day before the event to remind them to come.

Once you know how many people to expect at your event, you can prepare your materials as below:

*PRO TIP: Rainy weekends and early evenings are prime time for phone banking as lots of people are home!*

- Wifi access details – write these on a white board, or on slips of paper to pass out
- Tables and chairs – space seating out so people can have a quiet space to call from
- Top up and charge burner phones (if using)
- Prepare online call lists, and print out paper lists (always have paper lists ready as back up)
- Print calling scripts, and information on campaign messages or polling booth locations
- Lay out snacks, water, tea and coffee
- Extension cords, power boards, chargers, and spare pens and paper are always handy to have on hand!

## **During a Phone Bank**

Begin your phone bank with an upbeat briefing. Introduce yourself, do a round of introductions for your volunteers, and ensure everyone has signed in. Let everyone know the purpose of the phone bank (e.g. ‘volunteer recruitment’), and the types of people you are targeting that day (e.g. supporters, who will likely be easy to talk to). Discuss key campaign messages, practise going through the script, and Health and Safety of the venue. Make sure everyone knows how many calls you are aiming for, when the phone bank is ending, and who to talk to if they need help. Skilled and experienced callers can start making calls after this briefing.

First time or newer volunteers should stay with the phone bank organiser for further training before beginning to make calls. Training for first time or new volunteers should include training on story, messaging, and conversation strategies. Training should also include practise conversations, and real-life examples of experiences on the doors. New volunteers may appreciate hearing experienced volunteers make real calls first, and having an experienced volunteer next to them for their first calls.

Volunteers do not need to have policies memorised in detail, but should be comfortable building a connection with voters over shared values. It can be handy to have a one-page cheat sheet of quick campaign messages for callers to refer to.

If volunteers are using their own phones and don't have high or unlimited minutes, it can be nice to offer them some cash or to top their phone up for them. They could also use burner phones (cheap mobile phones) provided by the campaign.

## **After a Phone Bank**

Check in on your volunteers and debrief – this is a great time to provide some kai or coffee. You can do a group debrief like ‘Pit and Peak’ (best part of the event, worst part of the event) so everyone can share their stories of the day. You can also ask your volunteers about anything that needs to be followed up, and debrief individually after particularly challenging conversations.

Congratulate your volunteers and share the number of calls you made at the event – this is incredibly motivating and rewarding. Let everyone know when the next phone bank will be, and ask them all to sign up for another event.

Pack up all your gear, and process all of the data collected from the event.

## **How to Run a Great Direct Voter Contact Public Event**

Direct Voter Contact events are things like street corner meetings or larger community meetings. These events are designed for interested people to learn more about you and your campaign. These are general guidelines – you can adapt these suggestions to suit your specific event.

### **Before a Direct Voter Contact Public Event**

Good event locations are easy to find and get to, and are accessible for your target audience.

Choose a time that will suit your target audience: elderly people will come out during week days, younger audiences will likely prefer evenings or weekends.

Call some of your volunteers and ask them to help you with the event. You might need help setting up the venue, greeting people at the event, or having someone whizz ahead to set up the next street corner meeting. It can also be helpful to have supporters attending an event as a ‘rent a crowd’. Brief your volunteers before the event, and do a run through if needed.

The best way to let people know about your event is to invite them on the doors and phones. This is an easy ‘action’ for supportive or undecided voters, and a good way to get their contact details. You can target people who live near the event location, or people who may be interested in the event topic (e.g. a community meeting on housing).

If you have the resource you can also let people know about your event by:

- Leafleting people who live nearby
- Sponsoring a social media post into the area

- Putting up posters on community noticeboards
- Advertising in community papers
- Sending out an invitation to your mailing list
- Inviting relevant organisations and high profile community members

### **During a Direct Voter Contact Public Event**

Arrive early at the event location. Aim to be set up well before guests start arriving, and plan for some to arrive early.

Display clear signage, so people can find your event easily. Good, professional signage also reinforces your identity as a candidate.

If people are likely to be taking photos of the event, or if media are attending, consider this when choosing your focal point of the event (such as where the candidate stands to speak). You may want to have branded signage behind you. Stand somewhere with good lighting for photos, such as outside, or near a window (but not in front of it).

When people begin to arrive, ensure your candidate and a team of volunteers are greeting guests as they enter. Volunteers can chat to guests as they are waiting to meet the candidate, and introduce them when it is their turn. Volunteers can also help ensure guests sign in to the event, and get their contact details to follow up with. The candidate should be free to spend the event talking to guests.

If you do a Q&A session at the event, keep it very brief or ask for questions in advance. Q&A's work best for events based around a single issue. Your candidate's time is better spent doing a brief presentation to the entire audience or group, then having individual conversations and mingling around the event. Candidates should meet as many people as they can: if people would like longer discussions about their issue, get their details and follow up with them another time.

### **After a Direct Voter Contact Public Event**

Check in on your volunteers and debrief – this is a great time to provide some kai or coffee. You can do a group debrief like 'Pit and Peak' (best part of the event, worst part of the event) so everyone can share their perspective of the event. You can also ask your volunteers about what went well at the event, and how you could make it better for next time.

Thank your volunteers, pack up all your gear, and process all of the data collected from the event.

If you have great quality photos from the event, consider sponsoring a social media post into the area to show people what a great success it was. You can also send these photos to your mailing list of supporters.

## PERSONAL STORY – SELF, US, NOW

Your personal story helps you to build relationships based on shared values, and ties in to the purpose of the campaign. Your story helps you build connections with the people you meet during your campaign. Telling our personal stories of the challenges we face can inspire others and motivate them to create change.

The art of story is in the telling, not the writing: storytelling should be interactive and feel natural. Speak from the heart and make it conversational, rather than reciting your story like a speech.

You can have stories for a range of issues to connect with your voters: if someone says ‘housing’ is important to them, share your story about housing.

A good story is drawn from a series of choice points in your life – the challenges you faced, the choices you made, and the outcomes you experienced. Story shouldn’t be about your deepest trauma – only share what you are comfortable to share.

- Challenge

What was your challenge? Why was it challenging?

- Choice

Why did you make this choice? What inspired you to act – or not? How did this make you feel?

- Action

How did the outcome feel? What did it teach you?

What do you want to teach your audience, and how do you want them to feel?

Good stories include three elements:

- A Story of Self: why you were called to what you have been called to
- A Story of Us: what your community has been called to; shared purposes, goals, and vision
- A Story of Now: the challenge your community faces, the choices you must make, and the hope you can aspire to, together.

*“I know if you were to ask the young women in my area, one of the reasons they felt like they could be there was because I was there. Being a strong woman.”*



## Types of Story:

### Elevator Pitch

*Speech – a couple of minutes*

Your Elevator Pitch should be a short speech designed to introduce yourself, establish your values, and connect your values to the campaign. This should include your story, the campaign strategy, and specific asks to encourage your audience to take action.

### Persuasion Story

*Short conversation – a few sentences*

Your Persuasion Story is a conversation with an undecided voter to explain what's at stake for yourself, your family, and for the community. This conversation adds authenticity and a human face to your campaign messaging.

### Volunteer Recruitment Story

*Short conversation – a few sentences*

Your Volunteer Recruitment Story builds a connection with your supporter based on shared values. It personalises the campaign, adds a human face to your messaging, and creates urgency around your values, encouraging them to join you.

### Written Communications

*Written statement – a paragraph*

Stories in written communications are much more effective than simply using facts, figures, and policy statements. Use your story in these communications to further connect with your audience.

**EXAMPLE STORY:** “As a sole parent, I’m really concerned that we will never be able to afford a house of our own. I’m fearful that if our landlord gave us notice, we wouldn’t be able to find another rental. I’m supporting this candidate because they have been a strong advocate for more housing in my town”



## A NOTE ON FUNDRAISING

The most effective thing a candidate can do to raise money is to ask. Women in particular may feel uncomfortable asking for money, and have less of their own funds to spend on a campaign. It's important to remember money is crucial for winning, and winning is crucial for creating change. Ask for money as often as you can – you're absolutely entitled to ask.

### **There are four key groups of people to ask for money:**

#### 1. Your Personal Circle

These are people you know well, such as family, friends, and workmates. These should be the first people you ask to give you money, early on in the campaign. These people will give because they know you, they love you, and they want you to do well.

#### 2. Your Ideological Circle

These are the people who share your values and positions on a cause. These could be people from a Party, Union, or other organisation. These people will give because they want elected leaders who share their values. Your messaging reminds them of the issues you have already worked on together, and how you will support the cause once you are elected.

#### 3. Your Winning Team Circle

The people in this circle don't really care who you are, but they strongly dislike your opponent. They benefit from giving money to you because the person they don't like doesn't get elected. This group will give to you once your campaign is established, and you show some possibility of winning.

#### 4. The Power Circle

People in this circle are powerful, and want to protect their assets. They will give because they want access to the person they believe will win. You don't have to agree on all of their issues or stances, but it is important to consider your values when asking for these donations. Go for this money in the later stages of your campaign.

*Some candidates may be required to take leave from their current job during the election period. This could be for a few weeks, or longer if the election date is pushed back.*

*Campaigns should consider fundraising enough money to pay candidates' wages over this time. This is particularly important if they are coming from a lower paying job, or have a young family.*

*Political parties should also offer candidates financial support over this time.*

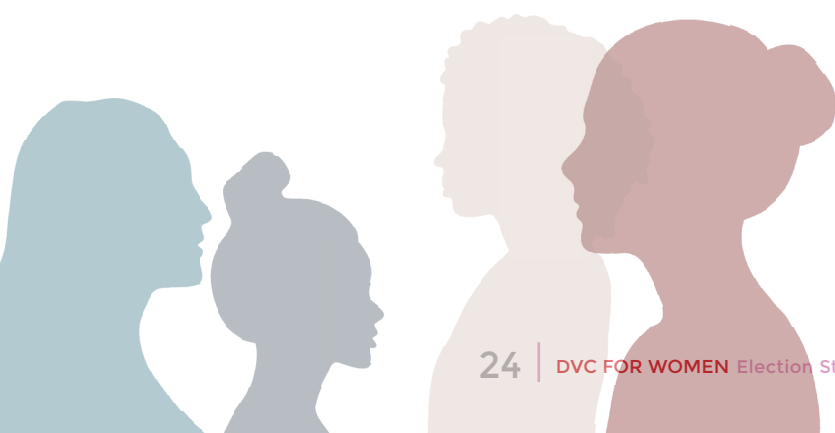
The process of asking for money is the same, whether you are asking at an event, in person, or on the phone. The candidate themselves making phone calls is the most effective source of fundraising, and requires very little time or planning.

Fundraising events are more expensive to run and less effective, but can help to bring wider attention and awareness to your campaign. Consider only hosting a couple of strategic media-friendly fundraising events, such as with a high profile and supportive guest speaker.

***PRO TIP:** Look after your big donors outside an election year. Invite them to your events, send them Christmas cards, and always make time to meet them for lunch or coffee.*

### **There are seven steps to successful money asks:**

1. Establish rapport - make a connection between you and the donor.
2. Tell the donor how they will benefit.
3. Explain what the contribution will do for your campaign- what will it buy?
4. Convince the donor you can win.
5. Ask for a specific amount.
6. Keep the donation confidential.
7. Collect your money.



## OUTREACH ACTIVITIES OUTSIDE AN ELECTION YEAR

Your Direct Voter Contact strategies should continue once you've been elected. The more DVC you do before an election season, the easier your campaign will be. These events help keep your volunteers involved, so you don't need to build a whole new team every campaign. Always make sure you gather as many contact details as you can.

- **Street Corner Meetings.** Meet with people in their neighbourhoods to get their thoughts on a particular issue. Buy some portable urns and make hot drinks from your car.
- **Community BBQs.** Take a BBQ and cheap sausages to a local sportsground or playground, and have a chat to people while they're out and about.
- **Morning Teas.** Take morning tea to a community group to thank them for their work and find out about their organisation.
- **Potlucks.** Offer up the chance for an occasional potluck dinner with groups of interested people, and take your favourite dish.
- **Guest Speaking.** Contact groups like Rotary and offer to guest speak at their meetings.
- **Fundraisers.** This is a great time to think about doing events that raise your profile and help you prepare for your next campaign.

*"When I first door knocked in 2013, I had no idea what Direct Voter Contact was, and it wasn't really explained to me. I was just told it was doorknocking and it was something we did to engage with voters. It was something we could use to find out what they were concerned about.*

*I see it more as yes they are voters, but they are also people in our community who have real concerns, and feelings, and fears and hopes, just as I do, just as you do.*

*For my campaign, we did DVC kind of inherently because we knew it was the right thing to do, and we knew that we needed to hear from the types of people we were currently representing.*

*That was the motive – we just wanted to understand. Through understanding, votes then come."*

## FINDING A CAMPAIGN MENTOR

Having a supportive mentor will really help you when the pressure is on. Finding an experienced campaign mentor is a great way of getting targeted and intensive advice.

If you want to run a successful campaign and get elected, a mentor could help you to:

- Understand the political environment and what you need to do to run a great campaign and get elected
- Raise your profile— your mentor can suggest how you might get more people to know who you are and support you
- Meet other people who might be able to help you destress and recharge
- Boost your confidence when you're feeling a bit down

### Here are four steps to finding a mentor:

1. Ask yourself why you'd like a mentor, and what sort of things you want help with. Think about the best type of people who could provide this.
2. Make a list of people you think would be good as a campaign mentor for you. It should be people you would feel comfortable with, with lots of experience in the areas you'd like help with.
3. Approach the first person on your list. If you already know them, ask them if they have time for a coffee and chat, or a Zoom catchup. If you don't know them, send a friendly email or call them and ask if they would offer you some campaign advice. Offer to shout them a coffee, and be sure to mention the person who recommended them.
4. Come prepared with questions to ask for their advice on. You might not ask them upfront to be your mentor, but see how the relationship goes first. If the first person on your list is too busy or it doesn't work out, you can ask the next person on your list. It's absolutely OK to have a range of mentors you can go to for advice!

*"I found it really helpful to have women mentors - very fortunate to have a former MP assigned to me in 2017, and quite lovely to have existing women politicians give me hints as I stumbled along too. In the last election our Women's Caucus ran some Zooms and tried to be available to support new candidates. It's the offline conversations that help I think. The "keep going, how to handle hecklers, going to events with a buddy to support you, techniques for dressing on a budget, how to keep your confidence/energy in a hard to win seat, packing your go bag - so if your heel breaks off, or you spill coffee down yourself you're prepared"*

*The sisterhood of support is critical for walking away feeling OK about the whole thing."*

## PRESENTATION AS A WOMAN CANDIDATE

Women candidates and elected officials are judged and analysed much more than their male counterparts. Women's physical appearances and fashion choices are policed and restricted, with much more ambiguous rules. Women who do not conform to societal expectations of what politicians 'should' look like can face intense backlash. Your physical appearance can be cited by your opponents as evidence that you are incompetent, out of touch, unprepared, or unprofessional.

Ensure people are focusing on your message rather than your appearance, by presenting yourself as though you have already been elected. Invest in a good hairstyle and get your make up professionally done (if you wear it) before your candidate and hoarding photos and any big events. These costs should be factored in to your campaign expenses. Being worried about your appearance, or fidgeting with clothes can make you come across as nervous, which we don't want to show in election campaigns.

It's important to dress to your voter base: if your voter base is working class families, leave your expensive designer handbag at home. You can still incorporate personality pieces in to a professional look, but as long as you don't detract from your campaign messages. The most important thing is that your clothes are in good condition and that you look well groomed.

Being a busy candidate you may have many events in a day, all requiring different dress codes. Consider keeping outfit and shoe changes in your car, or at your campaign base. It's handy to keep a blazer on hand; you can add it to a casual outfit to make it more professional. You may also wish to consider keeping a 'campaign kit' on hand, with all the things you need to look photo-ready at short notice (such as a lint roller, clothes steamer, make up, hairbrush, or portable hair straightener).

Campaign wardrobes can be incredibly expensive, especially if you are coming from a career which does not require a similar style of dress. Purchase some key pieces (like blazers) in the best quality you can afford (great condition second hand is fine!), and buy cheaper pieces to extend your wardrobe (such as tops). See if you can borrow

*"It's really insane to even have to say this, but pretty much every woman candidate I have campaigned for has had some scrutiny around appearance/ clothing / hair... They had offensive comments in newspapers etc. I think this is worth mentioning."*

*"Women are always judged for their appearance. The standards are higher when you are a woman, and even higher if you are a woman of colour like me."*

*"I didn't want to say it, but grooming and appearance is still questioned for woman candidates."*

clothing from friends, particularly for pieces you will only wear once or twice. Some organisations provide clothing for women candidates: see if there is one near you.

Some cultural events will have different expectations of respectful dress. If in doubt, ask your event host for guidance on how to dress respectfully. There may be occasions where you will be expected to wear a dress rather than pants, cover your shoulders, or wear certain colours, so have options for those. There may be times where you can wear cultural dress from another culture too: hire these, or borrow from a friend.

**Below is a basic guide for style choices suitable for most campaign events:**

1. Doorknocking. Your goal is to look relatable, and have people listen to you and trust you. You want to wear something anyone in your community would wear, but a bit more elevated.
2. Fundraising/Community Events. Your goal is to look trustworthy, and for people to trust you enough to give you money and support. You want to still look approachable, but more formal than you would for doorknocking.
3. Evening Functions. Your goal is to look polished and formal, while simple enough that your outfit doesn't distract from your message.
4. Candidate Debates. Your goal is to look authoritative, and ready to handle political issues as the best candidate.





## CANDIDATE WELL-BEING

Elections create a unique set of pressures on political candidates. The campaign trail can be exhausting, particularly for candidates who are juggling employment, their families, and other responsibilities.

Long hours on the campaign and intense public and media scrutiny can take their toll. Women candidates are held to much higher standards and scrutiny than their male counterparts, and these standards are even higher for women of colour.

Make sure you have a good campaign team around you that you can call on as needed. Ask your support team to come to your events and be friendly faces you can look for in the crowd. Ask a trusted friend or volunteer to monitor your social media and email inbox, so you don't see any personal attacks.

Make sure you make time for people outside of your campaign team too, such as your partner, friends, and family. This can help you feel normal again, and less isolated. Consider a short trip to somewhere outside of your campaigning area if you'd like some anonymity.

Look after your physical health. Make sure you are getting enough sleep, and try to make some healthy food choices on the campaign trail. Schedule time in to do the activities you find relaxing, such as going for a walk or reading a book. Turn your phone onto Flight Mode if you'd like to use the camera or listen to music, but don't want to be disturbed.

**If you feel like you need professional support, access counselling or speak to your GP.**

**Mental health problems can, and do, develop in anyone.**

*“The false rumours that fly about women candidates is way more intense than what I have ever seen male candidates experience.”*

*“The real personal attacks are probably the biggest things I see our women candidates having to navigate through, it seems to me that it's the stuff that is the hardest on the whole journey.”*

*“There's the misogynist and sexist comments about appearance and there's the sexualised commentary, being criticised for having children or not having them, being labelled as man hating and infantile graffiti on your image on posters. As was the case for Jacinda, being given diminutive names like Cindy, being told you're aggressive when being assertive, being laughed at for being kind at the same time as clear and firm. Pretty much the lot of all wahine toa but particularly those in politics. Oh and being told if you don't like it - leave politics or get a sense of humour!”*

*“People hold women responsible for the actions of their partners and families much more than they do for men.”*



## SECURITY AS A WOMAN CANDIDATE

### **Consider your personal security before you begin your campaign.**

You may wish to apply for you and your partner to register on the unpublished electoral roll. This can help to protect and hide your home address from public record, and prevent unwanted visitors.

You can apply to register for the unpublished roll by completing the form available on the Vote.nz website, and providing a letter explaining why your circumstances place you at risk. This letter must be written by from someone of standing in the community, such as a lawyer, police officer, or another elected official.

You may wish to remove your car registration and home address from the public register too. You can do this by opting out on the Waka Kotahi New Zealand Transport Agency website. You will need your New Zealand Driver License, and your vehicle(s) licence plate numbers.

Set strong passwords on all of your social media and email accounts, and activate two-factor authentication. Make sure your passwords aren't easily guessable, and don't contain any personal information that people could guess. Use a different password for each account.

Be wary of people who excessively contact you, turn up to all of your events, and post about you obsessively on social media. Contact the Police if you receive threatening or concerning messages. Make sure you have someone with you any time you have publicly advertised where you are going to be.

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- Fiji Women's Forum 'Women in Politics Campaign Handbook'
- Ganz, Marshall 'What is Public Narrative: Self, Us, & Now'
- National Democratic Institute ([ndi.org](http://ndi.org))
- New Zealand Labour Party internal training documents

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