**GREAT STAGING LOCATIONS: OVERVIEW AND SIMULATIONS**

**NOTES:**

* Give a little bit more of the WHY behind a staging location
	+ Volunteer/canvasser experience
	+ Give their time to a campaign—we have a responsibility to do that as efficiently as possible
* Focus on the outside (parking/signs/etc…)

**CONTEXT**

This training module should be held approximately 4-6 weeks before GOTV.

**TIMING**

Approximately 65 minutes in length, including about 30 minutes for overview and best practices, and 35 minutes for simulations and debrief.

**AGENDA**

**1. Staging Locations!** *2 minutes*

**What is a staging location—**

1. Well-run staging locations are the *key* to successful implementation of GOTV.

2. Some of the challenges include:

- Getting people in and out

- Thorough and efficient training

- Orderly distribution and collection of turf packets

- Managing rushes of people and adapting when no one shows up

3. Having your SLs set up correctly will make a big difference... This session will focus on how to run great SLs

**2. Your Past Experiences** *12 minutes*

1. Leverage past experiences of staff to provide overview of SLs and what makes a great one

2. Here are the questions you should ask:

a. To begin, why do we have staging locations?

b. What’s the benefits of having staging locations rather than just launching everything out of one office?

c. Who has worked at a great SL, and what made it great?

d. Who has worked at a not-so-great SL, and what made it not so great?

3. Note: You should consider prompting one or two of your experienced staff members in advance to prepare a story to tell.

**3. 10 Lessons for a Great SL** *1 minute*

1. Transition slide w/ title only

**4. Canvass location is an assembly line** *2 minutes*

1. Map of ideal SL flow

**5. The canvasser launch areas should be as separated as possible from the returning canvasser intake** *1 minute*

1. If your space allows for it, have the intake area be outside the office or have its own separate entrance/wing of the office.

2. If you try to have returning canvassers with completed packets entering into the same door as canvassers who need packets or are leaving to canvass, your staging location will quickly devolve.

**6. Phone bank location is also an assembly line** *1 minute*

1. Map of ideal SL flow

**7. No couches or chairs!** *2 minutes*

a. You want people to come in and get out on the doors fast, and chairs invite lounging.

b. The only place you will want chairs is in the canvass breakdown area, which should be totally set aside from the output circle.

**8. Label everything** *1 minute*

a. There will be many, many people in your staging location who don’t know what things are or where things are.

b. Over-label, over-label, over-label.

**9. Practice – and take it seriously** *2 minutes*

a. The more realistic you can make your dry runs, the more fine tuned your actual GOTV operation will be.

**10. Follow the chain of command. Always.** *1 minute*

b. Chain of command for a reason.

c. Examples of when it shouldn’t be broken!

**11. Learn from each day.** *1 minute*

a. Learn from your Dry Runs. After each day of the Dry Run, have an intentional debrief meeting to discuss what worked and what did not.

b. Learn from Day 1, 2, and 3 to improve for the next day. The SL team should gather after each day of GOTV to assess what worked and make any needed changes for the next day. Consider beginning by asking each SL role to assess what went well and what would change. Then, walk-through the flow and discuss how to improve SL flow.

**12. Confirm calls** *1 minute*

a. Can be difference between noone showing up and lots of people showing up

b. This should be happening throughout GOTV!

**13. Great training equals great canvassers.** *1 minutes*

a. SL trainers must be trained in advance to be able to train effectively.

b. Training should include introductions, why this is important, overview of script, role play, overview of report format, and important reminders. Don’t let people forget the role play!

c. This is extra important during GOTV when folks show up who never were involved before!

**14. Like a duck in water.** *1 minutes*

a. No matter how busy you’ll feel inside, always act calm. It’ll make a big difference.

b. Assume best intentions!

c. Focus on your body language, tone of voice, speed of movement around SL that all communicate your calmness.

**15. Have fun – and make it fun for others!** *1 minutes*

a. Our focus on the volunteer experience doesn’t go away during GOTV. If anything, it’s all the more important

b. Have fun – this is what we build for all year!

**16. Simulations!** *5 minutes (set-up)*

1. Transition slide w/ title only

2. You’ll need to pre-assign the following roles. The same person should be in the same role for all four simulations. You should make signs with their roles and tape them to your participants.

- Moderator

- Staging Location Director

- Greeter

- Sign Man

- Local Activist

- Trainer

- Canvasser

1. Participants who have roles should receive the guidance for how each simulation will go beforehand. There isn’t much acting that needs to happen, but they should understand their role so they can act it out.

**17 Simulation 1: No One Shows Up** *5 minutes*

1. SET-UP: You open your staging location at 9AM to intake volunteers for your first shift. However, even though you had 15 shifts confirmed, only 1 person shows up.

2. ROLE-PLAY:

- The location is all set.

- Greeter and trainer are both ready.

- 1 canvasser comes into room but no one else shows up.

- Staging location director is worried and not sure what to do.

1. DEBRIEF:

- No one shows… What do you do?

- What should you have done before hand to improve chances that people show?

- At this point, what should you do?

**18. Simulation 2: Overflow and underprepared** *5 minutes*

1. SET-UP: You open your staging location at 9AM to intake volunteers for your first shift. You are pleasantly surprised that your hard work over the course of the last week has resulted in significant numbers of volunteers who have showed up. However, you aren’t ready or properly prepared.

b. ROLE-PLAY:

- The canvassers show up and overrun the staging location.

- No one is signed in.

- They go to training and there is only one trainer and the trainer is not able to get their attention.

- Volunteers show up and have to wait for call lists and walk lists to be printed.

- Some angry volunteers start to comment to the group about how unorganized things are and they decide to leave.

c. DEBRIEF:

- What could have been done on the front end in order to prevent the problem?

- How do you manage pre-canvass trainings so that you are not overflowed with people?

- How can you troubleshoot the problem of not having enough lists from turning in to a bigger problem of volunteers getting upset?

- What do you say to your staging location captain to keep her calm?

**19. Simulation 3: Annoying Policy Guy and Sign Guy** *5 minutes*

1. SET-UP: Your largest group of scheduled volunteers is due to arrive and everything is prepared and ready to go. A few volunteers come in and begin being trained and then a few special volunteers’ walk in.

2. ROLE-PLAY:

- One volunteer wants to do nothing but talk to you about the state of the races and how you are feeling about the election.

- Another volunteer simply wants to deliver yard signs around and refuses to canvass or phone bank.

1. DEBRIEF:

- What problems did you see with this simulation?

- What could be improved?