

CAMPAIGN ORGANIZING BOOT CAMP

# Persuasion conversations

Liz Erickson / OFA Training Director / @LizzGErickson



OFA

A close-up portrait of a woman with light brown hair pulled back, smiling warmly at the camera. She is wearing large, gold-colored hoop earrings with colorful beads. The background is a blurred, textured wall.

**Liz Erickson**

OFA Training Director  
[@LizzGErickson](#)



**#OFAAction**  
**#OrganizingFor18**

**By what percentage point did George W. Bush win re-election in 2004?**



# Take a guess!

**2.46%**



# Goals for our time

- 1 Describe the framework for effective persuasion conversations

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- 1 Describe the framework for effective persuasion conversations
- 2 Use the persuasion conversations framework for talking to undecided voters
- 3 Feel motivated to apply the framework to organizing work

# Agenda

## Why persuasion?

Persuasion framework

Practice

Debrief and close



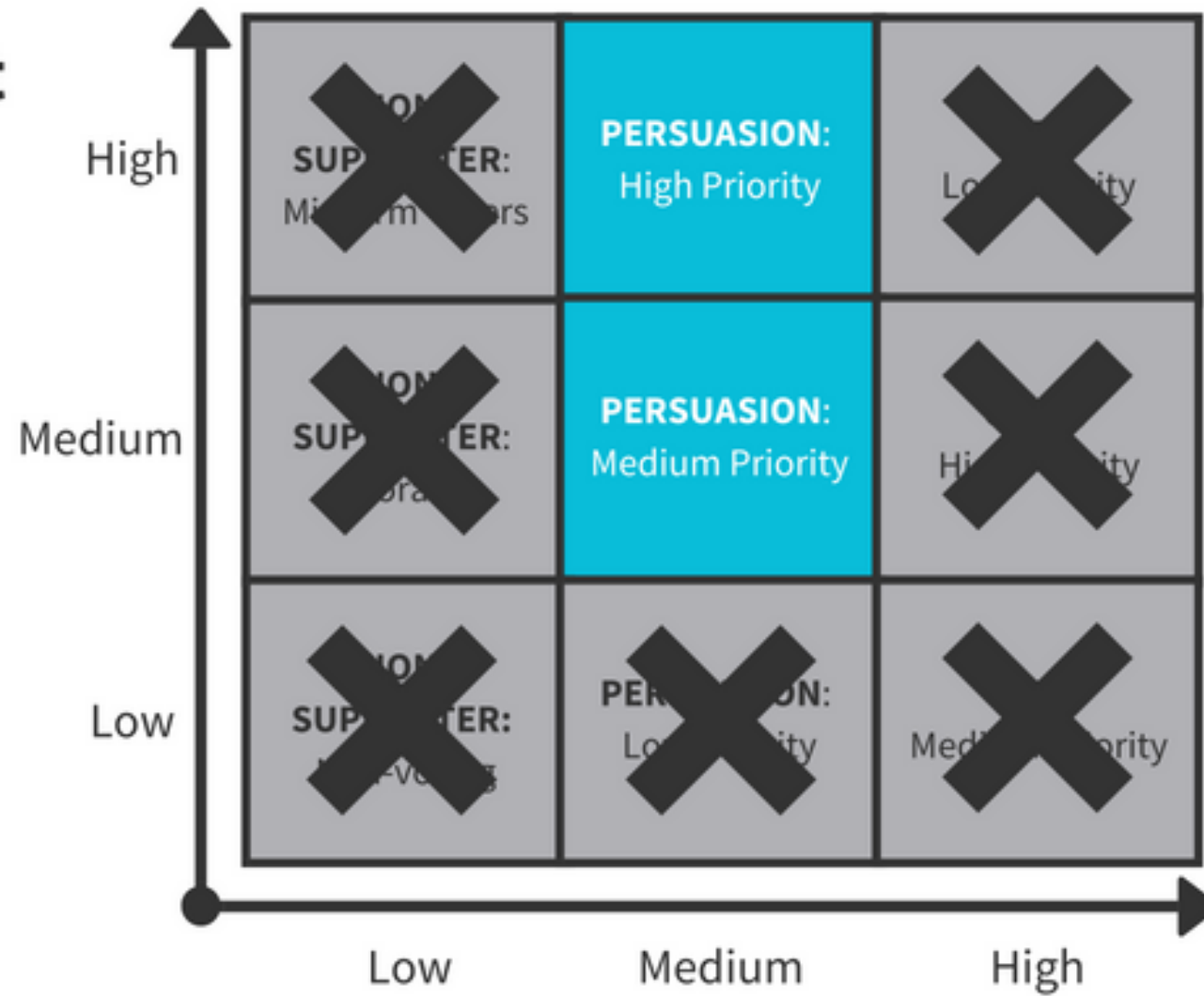
**We always need to  
understand the audience**

# Turnout

High	<b>NON-SUPPORTER:</b> Midterm Voters	<b>PERSUASION:</b> High Priority	<b>GOTV:</b> Low Priority
Medium	<b>NON-SUPPORTER:</b> Sporadic	<b>PERSUASION:</b> Medium Priority	<b>GOTV:</b> High Priority
Low	<b>NON-SUPPORTER:</b> Non-voting	<b>PERSUASION:</b> Low Priority	<b>GOTV:</b> Medium Priority
	Low	Medium	High

# Support

**Turnout**



**Support**

# Persuasion

**\*Source- Analyst Institute**

## Persuasion is necessary

- There simply aren't enough voters to win on GOTV alone
- The margins in many states and districts are very close



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# Persuasion

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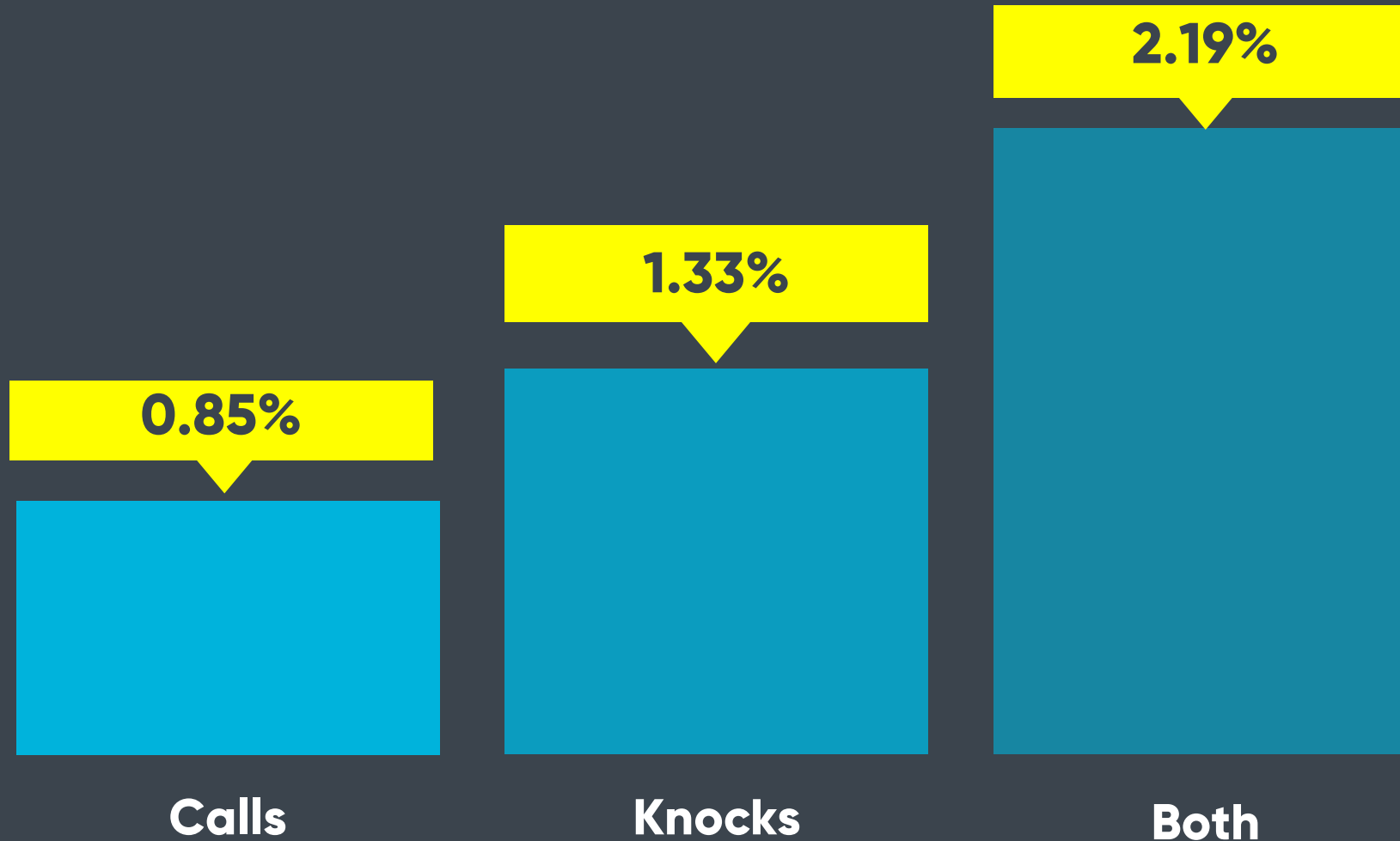
## Persuasion is challenging

- You're trying to change or shape opinions
- Partisanship has deep roots

## Thoughts on persuasion are still evolving!

- Creative methods are being tested in the field
- Organizing best practices are ever-evolving

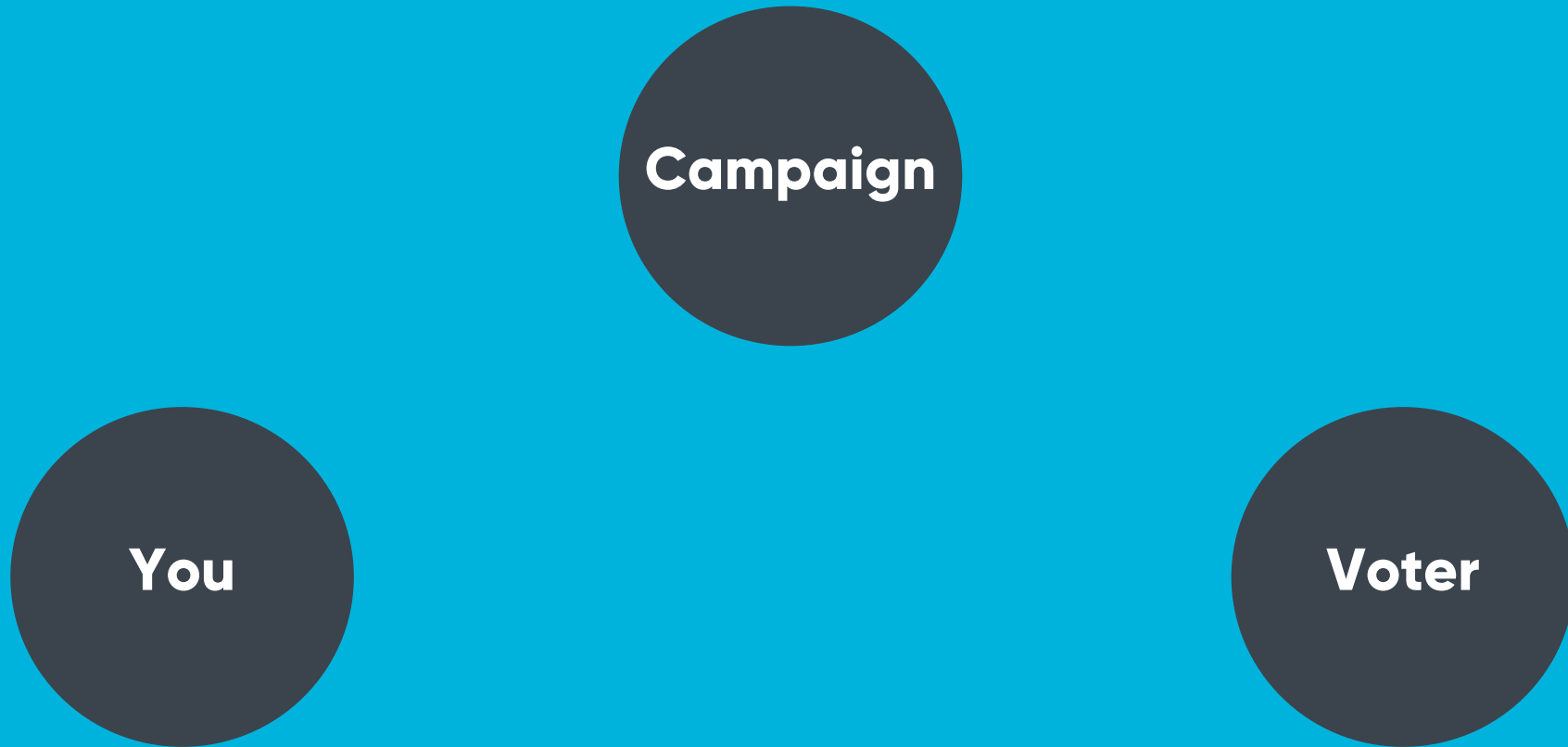
# Voter contact increases likelihood to vote



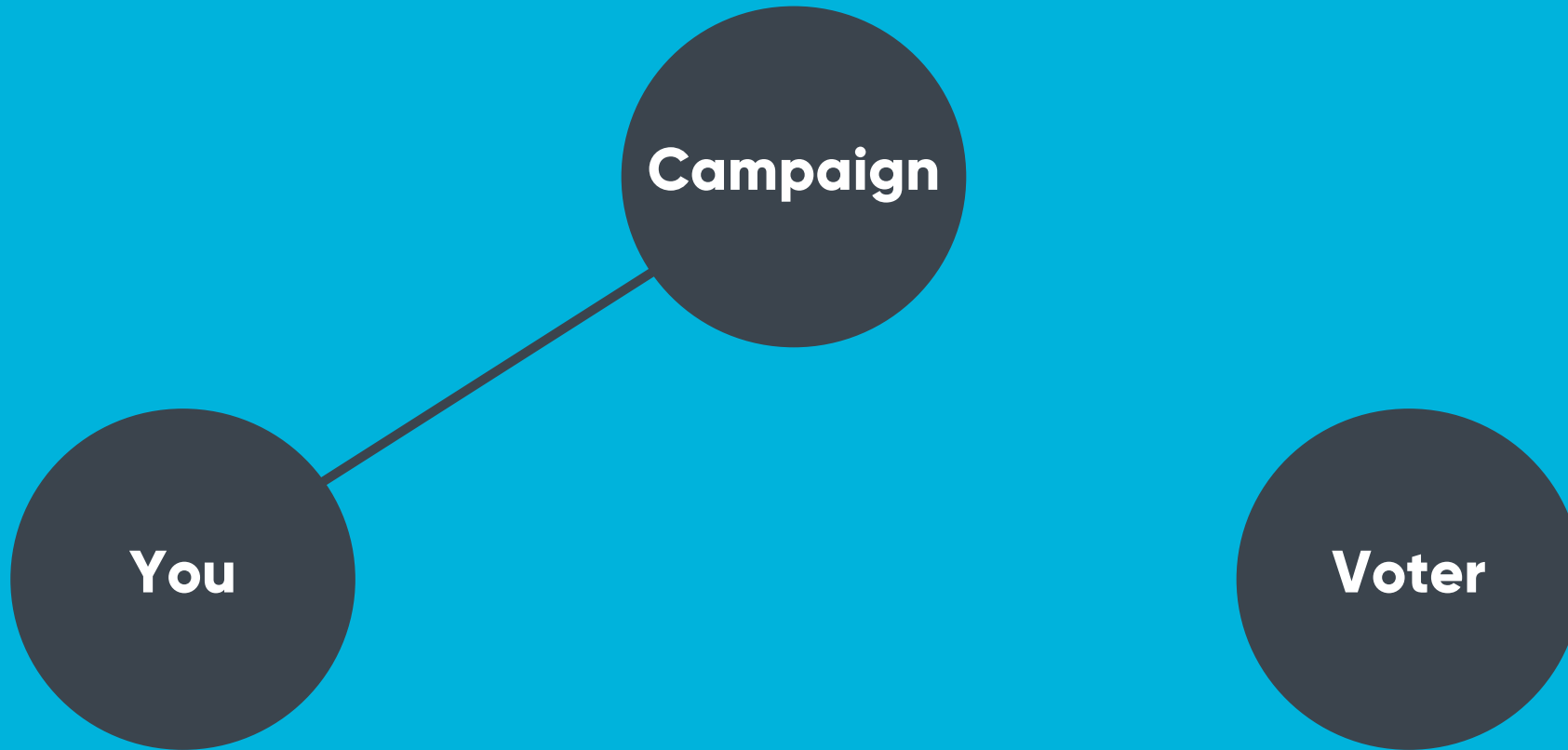
**Let's synthesize the connection  
between persuasion  
conversations and voters**

# Values

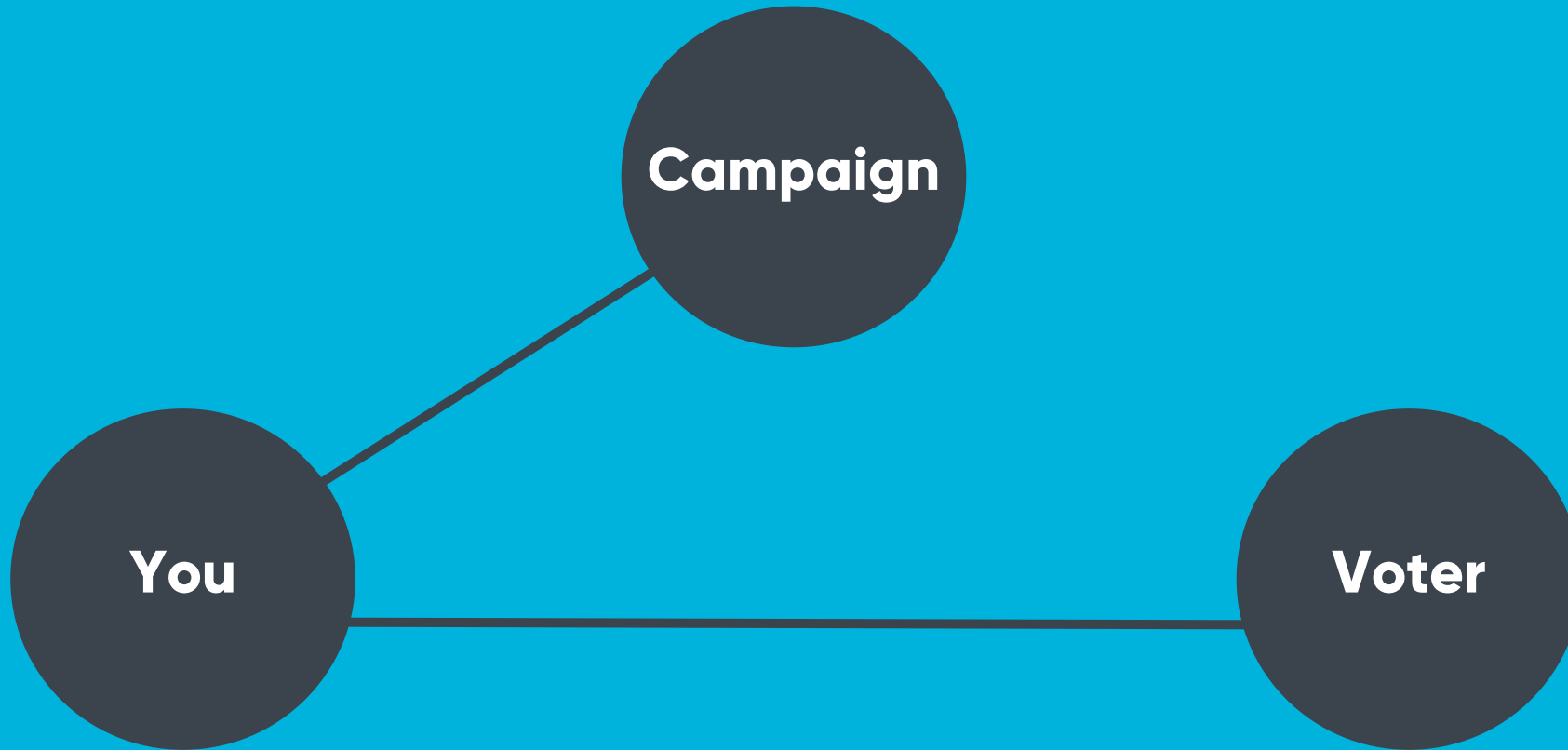
# Connecting on values



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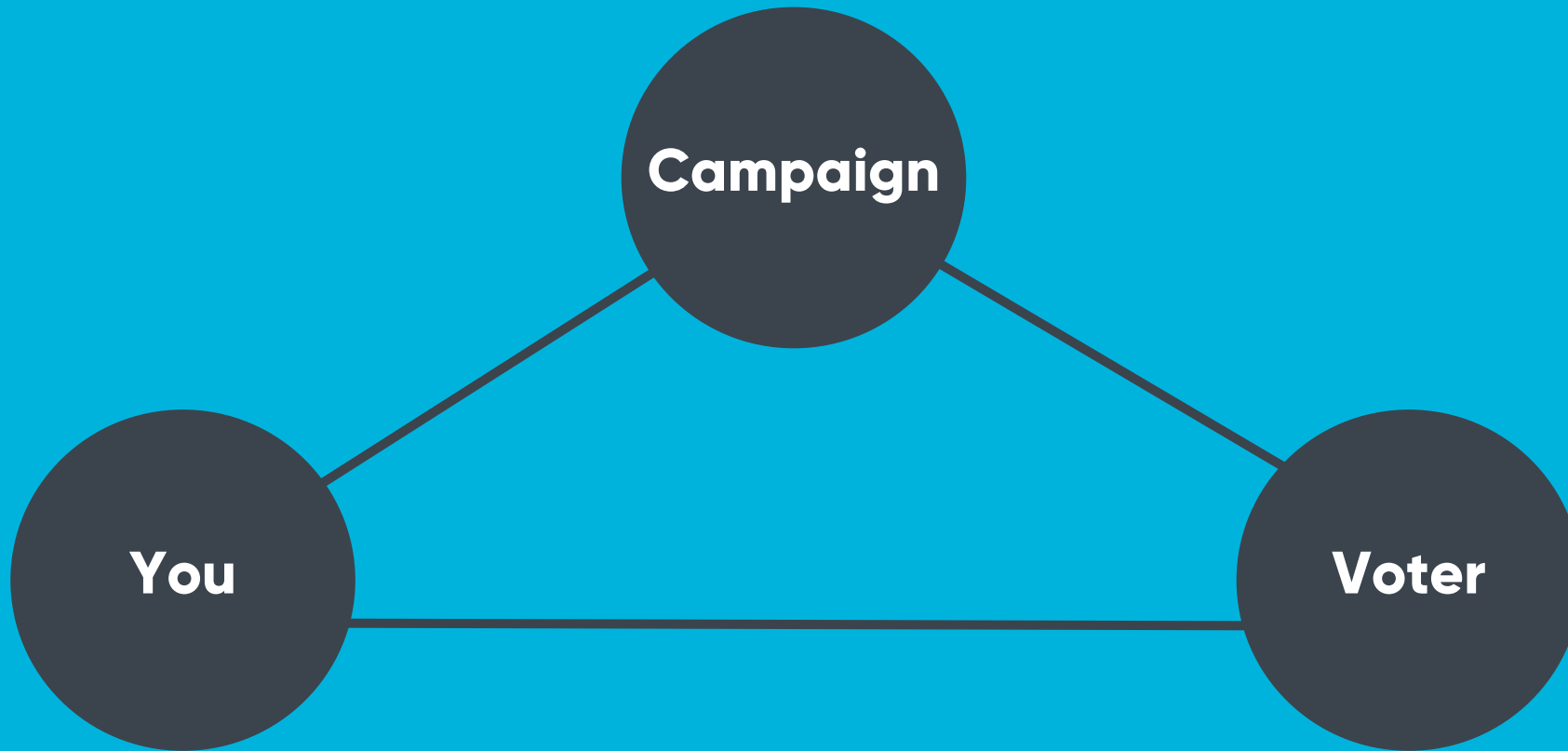


# Connecting on values





# Connecting on values



# Agenda

Why persuasion?

**Persuasion framework**

Practice

Debrief and close

**A PERSUASION CONVERSATION FRAMEWORK:**

**Acknowledge  
and relate**

# Acknowledge and relate

- Listen to the voter and find common ground on issues that you care about
- Use your personal story to deepen the connection—Remember your ‘why’
- Validate the voter’s concern. The goal is to build **trust and rapport** with the voter
- **Pro-tip:** Connect issues with a local lens

**A PERSUASION CONVERSATION FRAMEWORK:**

**Connect on values**

# Connect on values

- Surface what the underlying values are in what the voter is saying
- Focus the conversation around the values you hear the voter expressing and relate those values to yourself
- Remember—You understand more about who they are through non-judgmental probing questions and sharing your personal story!

**A PERSUASION CONVERSATION FRAMEWORK:**

# **Pivot to persuasion language**

# Pivot to persuasion language

- Connect the values you have identified to the work that you're doing and the candidate or cause
- Explain the benefits and impact of 'winning' or electing Candidate X as it pertains to the voter and your shared values



**A PERSUASION CONVERSATION FRAMEWORK:**

# Contrast

# Contrast

- Draw an appropriate contrast with opponent candidates on those values and issues
- Answer the questions – “What will happen if we don’t elect Candidate X or win on our issue?” and “How will it hurt the value we both share?”

## **A PERSUASION CONVERSATION FRAMEWORK:**

- 1. Acknowledge and relate**
- 2. Connect to values**
- 3. Pivot to persuasion language**
- 4. Contrast**

**Watch the clip on  
following slide**



# Agenda

Why persuasion?

Persuasion framework

**Practice**

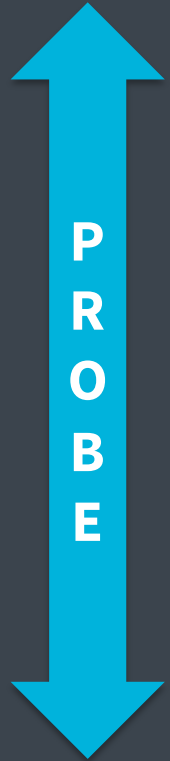
Debrief and close

**Now it's your turn to  
practice this persuasion  
framework!**

# **Pause for activity 1: Stick figure**



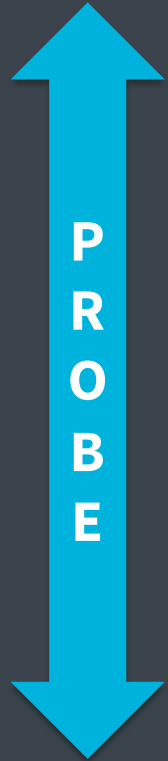
# Scenario 1:



- **Acknowledge**
- **Values**
- **Accomplishments**
- **Contrast**

“I hear all these things that you’re saying...I don’t really like what’s going on, but the economy seems to be doing alright. After the 2008 economic crash, I lost everything, and this is the first time I feel like I’m on good footing. It’s a tough choice.”

# Scenario 2:



- **Acknowledge**
- **Values**
- **Accomplishments**
- **Contrast**

“I really can’t stand this administration or this congress. But I don’t really understand how your candidate is going to make it any better—there doesn’t seem to be any real message.”

# **Pause for activity 2: Scenarios**



**REPORT-BACK:**

# **What did you come up with?**

Share your thoughts out loud!

# Agenda

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**Debrief and close**

# Debrief

What are common values in your community that you might hear at the door?

How will you adapt your communication style when talking to voters?

What do you predict the biggest challenges in implementing this persuasion framework will be?

# Next Steps

- 1 Continue to practice the persuasion framework
- 2 Rehearse connecting on shared values with two other people and ask for feedback
- 3 Apply your persuasion skills to volunteering on campaigns

**Thank you!**