

Network NOVA
You and the 34%:
How to Have Meaningful Conversations
with High-Potential Voters
Handout for July 18, 2022 Training

Instructions for Breakout #1: Getting Across the Moat

Getting Started

- The person whose name comes first alphabetically starts as the Volunteer. Next in the alphabet is the Voter, and last is the Observer. (We'll prompt you to switch roles.)
- Use the script below to get started. In this breakout, Volunteers are only trying to get the ball rolling, not to get the Voter to commit to anything yet.

Volunteer

- Focus: You're trying to build rapport with a high-potential voter.
- Attitude: You're respectful and curious, trying to understand the voter's perspective.
- Goal #1: Get the voter to articulate why they don't vote. Let them do most of the talking!
- Goal #2: Try to use at least one Open-ended question and one Reflection.

Voter

- Attitude: You're a bit annoyed and still remember all the calls you got in 2020. You're busy but willing to talk if the Volunteer cares about what you say.
- History: You haven't voted in over 10 years. If the caller earns your respect, give reasons why you're not voting, and name a couple things you care about.

Observer

- Listen carefully for Open-ended questions and Reflections and write down a few words.
- Also note if you hear the Volunteer make any Strategic Pauses.
- Remind the group to switch roles after 5 minutes.

Breakout #1 Script

VOLUNTEER: Hi, I'm trying to reach [VOTER'S NAME].

VOTER: That's me. Who's this?

VOLUNTEER: My name is ____, and I'm a volunteer with Congresswoman Elaine Luria. I'm not calling to ask for money.

VOTER: I'm pretty busy right now.

VOLUNTEER: I'll make this quick – it should just take a minute. I'm wondering – what, if anything, have you heard about Elaine Luria?

VOTER: Oh, I'm not interested in politics. I don't vote.

VOLUNTEER: Tell me more about that.

VOTER: *[Describe why you're not interested in politics and why you don't vote.]*

VOLUNTEER and VOTER continue conversation. VOLUNTEER uses Open-ended questions and Reflections. If you get stuck, try using a phrase from page 3.

Instructions for Breakout #2: Entering the Castle

Getting Started

- The person whose name comes first alphabetically starts as the Voter. Next in the alphabet is the Volunteer, and last is the Observer. (We'll prompt you to switch roles.)
- Use script below to get you started. It's OK if you don't get through the whole scenario.

Volunteer

- Attitude: Again, build rapport; be respectful and curious. Listen more than you talk.
- Goal #1: Find out 1-2 things that are important to the Voter.
- Goal #2: Elicit at least one piece of "Change Talk."
- Goal #3: (if time) Make an "ask" tailored to the Voter's interests. Close and thank them.

Voter

- Attitude: If you sense the Volunteer cares, open up and elaborate on your thinking.

Observer

- Jot down any examples of Sustain Talk or Change Talk that you hear.
- Remind your group to switch roles after 6 minutes.

Breakout #2 Script

VOLUNTEER: Hi, I'm trying to reach [VOTER'S NAME]

VOTER: That's me. Who's this?

VOLUNTEER: My name is ____, and I'm a volunteer with Congresswoman Elaine Luria. I'm not calling to ask for money.

VOTER: Oh, I don't pay attention to politics. I don't vote.

VOLUNTEER: Oh, that's interesting! Tell me more about that.

VOTER picks one statement from left column. VOLUNTEER uses responses in right column.

Voter	Volunteer
All politicians are crooks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It's important for you to support candidates who have integrity. • I'm wondering – if a candidate who <i>really</i> listened to you got elected, what would be different in a year?
My vote doesn't matter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It sounds like you wonder if one vote makes a difference. • If you could change anything about Virginia, what would it be?
I don't have time to research the issues.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You want to make sure your vote reflects your values. • If you were in an elevator with Elaine Luria and Joe Biden for two minutes, what's one thing you'd ask them to change, and why?

Now let the conversation unfold for a couple of minutes. Then VOLUNTEER wraps up:

<i>Assessing support</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a scale of 0-10, how likely are you to support Congresswoman Elaine Luria, with 0 being very unlikely and 10 being very likely? • What might make your [number] increase to a [higher number]?
<i>Sharing information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could I send you information about Elaine Luria?
<i>Expressing gratitude</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I really appreciate your time. Thanks so much for talking with me.

Phrase List for Voter Engagement

Handy all-purpose phrases (silently count to 10 after using these... and listen carefully to the response!)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell me more about that. • I'd really like to know more about... • That sounds really hard. • It sounds like... <i>[try to summarize what you heard them say.]</i> • I'm curious – if you were in charge of Virginia, what 2 or 3 things would you change? • <i>(To gently redirect the conversation):</i> I hear you. <i>(Brief pause.)</i> What I'd really like to know more about is • Make up your own! (Suggestion: create phrases that are curious, non-judgmental, and can't be answered with yes/no.)

Getting across the moat: Navigating the start of the conversation	
If the voter says...	You could say...
Who's calling? What is this about?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Thanks so much for taking my call! • My name is _____, and I'm a volunteer with _____. I'm <u>not</u> calling to ask for money. • I just had a couple quick questions about the upcoming election. I'm wondering – what, if anything, have you heard about the candidates in this race? <hr/> (or) <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I'm a volunteer with Congresswoman Elaine Luria, and I'm calling because her campaign has asked us to reach out to every voter in the district to ask – what issues are most important to you?
I'm busy right now.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It sounds like you've got a lot going on. I'll make this quick – it should just take a couple minutes. • <i>(If they still can't talk):</i> I'm so sorry to catch you at a bad time. Could I text you information about why I'm calling?
I hate getting these calls.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I hear you! I actually hate making these calls, too. But this issue is so important to me that I'm going outside my comfort zone. • <i>(Optional):</i> I'm really concerned about the future of our state, and I'm trying to step up by talking with people in the community. • I'm wondering if you had two minutes to talk?
Somebody just called about this yesterday.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Oh, sorry to bother you again! But I didn't get to hear your response, and I'd really like to hear what you think about _____.

Entering and exploring the castle: Eliciting change talk	
If the voter says...	You could say...
All politicians are crooks.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It sounds like it's important for you to support candidates who have integrity. • I'm wondering – if a candidate who <i>really</i> listened to you got elected, what would be different in a year?
My vote doesn't matter.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could you tell me more about that? • It sounds like you wonder if one person's vote makes a difference. • I'm wondering, if you could change 2-3 things about Virginia, what would they be?
I don't have time to research the issues/candidates.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You want to make sure your vote reflects your values. • I'm curious – if you were in an elevator with Elaine Luria for two minutes, what's one thing you'd ask her to change, and why?
Politicians make lots of promises, but nothing ever changes.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • It sounds like you have some ideas about how Virginia could improve. Tell me more about that!
I haven't voted in decades.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What inspired you to vote the last time you did?
I'm not interested in voting.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Is there anything that might motivate you to vote?
My vote is private.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I totally respect that! Thank you for being a voter. Could I tell you a bit about why I'm supporting Elaine Luria? • I'm curious – would you be willing to tell me what issues are most important to you?
<i>(If voter's top issues align with Democratic priorities)</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Elaine Luria is aligned with you on that. She's your voice in Congress.

Exchanging parting gifts: Wrapping up the conversation	
<i>Assessing support</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • On a scale of 0-10, how likely is it that you'll vote in the upcoming election, with 0 being very unlikely and 10 being very likely? • What might make your [number] increase to a [slightly higher number]?
<i>Sharing information</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Could I send you information about Elaine Luria and the upcoming election? • Is this a good number to text you information, or would you prefer email?
<i>Making a plan</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • When do you think you'd be able to vote?
<i>Vote tripling</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would you be able to tell three friends or family members about the upcoming election, and encourage them to support Congresswoman Elaine Luria and Democrats in all the races? • If I texted you information, would you be willing to share this on social media or by email to people you know?
<i>Permission to follow up</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Would it be OK to call or text you in a few weeks to see if you have any questions?
<i>Expressing gratitude</i>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • I really appreciate your time. • Thanks so much for talking with me.