

Librarian as Candidate



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Small Libraries Big Impact 2019

about

EveryLibrary



WHAT **ACTIVATES** VOTERS FOR A LIBRARY MEASURE?

25



The Librarian is the Candidate

The Library is the Incumbent

Library = Librarians + Community

“PERCEPTION OF THE LIBRARIAN”

Nothing impacts voter behavior more than their perception of the *librarian* and the library as institution.



strategy

PERCEPTION OF THE LIBRARIAN(S)

“[Voters] recognize the value of a
‘passionate librarian’ as a true
advocate for lifelong learning.”



- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-4

SINGLE BIGGEST TAKEAWAY

A voter's willingness to support increased library funding is not driven, or limited, by library use.

- OCLC "From Awareness to Funding" p. 7-2

WHAT ACTIVATES VOTERS?

Seven Factors:

A Reason to Vote

Mobilized

Culture/Tradition/Habit of Voting*

Trust in Government

Decided to Vote

Weather/Access to Polls

Personal Contact with Candidate or Issue*

WHAT MOTIVATES ACTIVISTS?

1. An Identified Need
2. Personal Motivation
3. Experience of the Issue*
4. Prior Success as an Advocate*
5. Institutional Reputation
6. Made a Pledge
7. Ease of Access to Advocacy Tools

ACTIVATE IN EITHER CONTEXT

VOTERS:

1. A Reason to Vote
2. Mobilization
3. Personal Contact with Candidate*
4. Culture/Tradition/Habit of Voting*
5. Trust in Government (pro or con)
6. Decided to Vote
7. Weather/Access to Polls

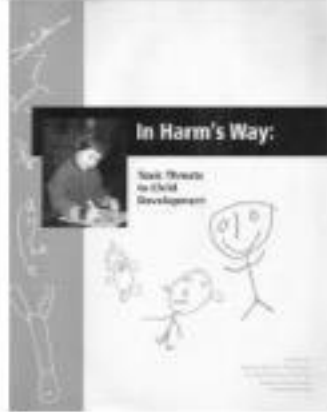
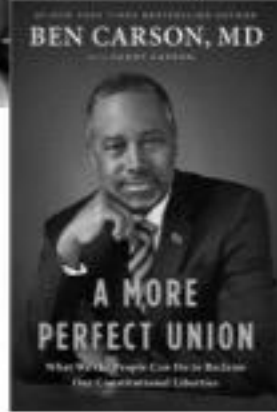
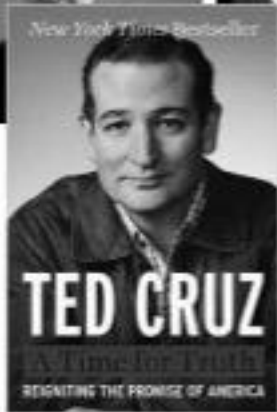
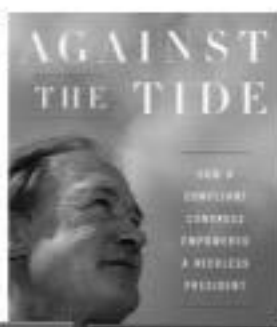
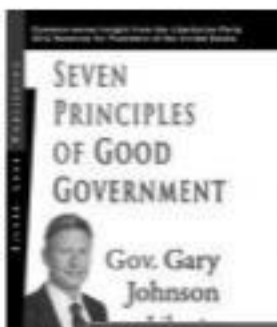
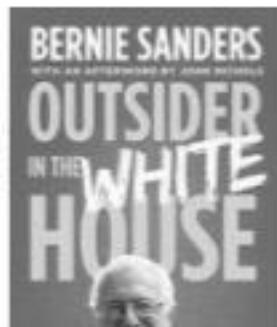
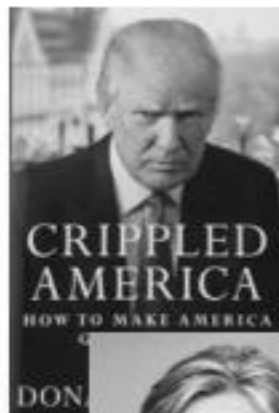
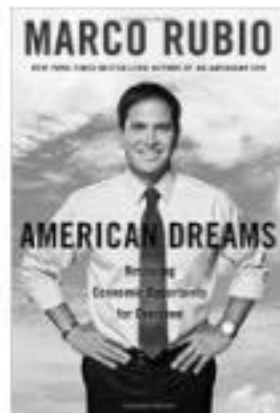
ACTIVISTS:

1. An Identified Need
2. Personal Motivation
3. Experience of the Issue*
4. Prior Success as Activist*
5. Institutional Reputation
6. Made a Pledge
7. Ease of Access to Tools

about
**OUR VALUE
SYSTEM**



HOW CANDIDATES TRANSMIT THEIR VALUES



*WHAT IS YOUR BOOK?

- Strategic Plan
- Management Plan
- Building Plan
- Budget Book
- Fundraising Goals
- Financials and Fiduciary



HOW DO WE TALK ABOUT OUR FUNDING?


A Strategic Plan that is about
more than getting people to
use the library.

MEET THE CANDIDATE

Who is doing the work
in the strategic plan?



WHAT DO YOU NEED TO GET FUNDED?

- 
- ▶ Hours
 - ▶ Collections and materials
 - ▶ Size of staff
 - ▶ Patrons and programs
 - ▶ Library cards in the community

It is really hard for humans to
care about statistics and
inputs/outputs.

WHAT DO YOU TRULY NEED TO GET FUNDED?

- What is your organizational “mission, vision and values”?
- What are your “expected and hoped-for outcomes” if funded?
- What happens if you don’t do the work?



TURNING THE STORY TO THE VALUES YOU SHARE

HOURS

→ *Place of discovery or refuge, retail anchor*

COLLECTIONS &
CIRC STATS

→ *Solving problems for parents, small businesses*

SIZE OF THE STAFF

→ *Expert librarians solving problems, helping people grow*

PATRONS AT PROGRAMS

→ *Lives touched, changed, improved*

LIBRARY CARDS
IN THE COMMUNITY

→ *Access and identity*

WHO ELSE CARES?

They want to see you
have the funding you
need, too. If they know
about it...



TALKING ABOUT TAXES WITH CONSERVATIVES, PROGRESSIVES AND LIBERTARIANS

ESPECIALLY WHEN YOU AREN'T
ONE YOURSELF

Political Communication Models

Progressive **My heroes are people who have stood up for the underprivileged.**
The people I cannot stand are the people who are indifferent to the oppression of women, minorities, and the poor.

Conservative **My heroes are people who have stood up for Western values.**
The people I cannot stand are the people who are indifferent to the assault on the moral virtues and traditions that are the foundation for our civilization.

Libertarian **My heroes are people who have stood up for individual rights.**
The people I cannot stand are the people who are indifferent to government taking away people's ability to make their own choices.

THE PLAN THAT NEEDS TO BE WRITTEN

I did this. We need that.



NUMBERS DO TELL THE STORY. BUT IT ISN'T THE WHOLE STORY

1. *Runs Created Formula:*

$$\frac{(\text{Hits} + \text{Walks} - \text{Caught Stealing}) \times (\text{Total Bases} + .7 \text{ Stolen Bases})}{\text{At Bats} + \text{Walks} + \text{Caught Stealing}}$$

2. *Isolated Power* is simply slugging percentage minus batting average.

3. *Defensive Efficiency Record (DER)*

To figure DER, you begin by making two estima

WHAT VOTERS AND CONSTITUENTS



BELIEVE

INFLUENCES HOW THEY'LL

LISTEN.

FOUR STORIES TO TELL

- Stories of our successes
- Stories of our failures
- Stories about people that the audience cares about
- Stories that decision makers want to hear

RUN “AS” OR “AGAINST” THE INCUMBENT

“As” = New Funding Extends Success

“Against” = New Funding Fixes Problems

The Library's record will be considered,
but it isn't the only factor in the race.

TALK ABOUT PLAN B

= What happens to *people* if it is NOT funded

AND NOT JUST PLAN A.

= What happens to *people* if it is funded

ADDRESS QUESTIONS LIKE...

- ▶ Where is my money going?
- ▶ Who is spending my money?

FOUR TIPS



Talk to non-users as frequently and in the same way as you survey users.

Change the way you field your surveys. Do them out in the community, preferably door-to-door or in various spots to reach people where they are at, and in person as much as possible.

Ask questions about “perception of the librarians” and not just about the library as an institution.

Run a true political poll via a third party organization (e.g. FOL, Foundation, non-profit organization, or university). Test the local tolerance for taxes at least 18 months prior to the Election.

BEST PRACTICES FOR COMMUNITY ASSESSMENT

**Field questions in ways
that breakthrough the
“4th wall”**

Oversample non-users

Get out of the library

- **Go to their homes**
- **Go door to-door**
- **Go to unusual places**
- **Locations where non-majority
or non-privileged pops
congregate**



INTRODUCE STAFF TO THE PUBLIC

humanize your social media

look past job titles

walk your neighborhoods

library card signups
door-to-door

surveys door to door



ONE MILLION



AMERICANS *for* LIBRARIES

FACEBOOK.COM/EVERYLIBRARY

THANK YOU

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