

The P.I.C.X System

There are a number of ways to canvass. Knocking on doors and the telephone are perhaps the two most popular. No matter which method/s of canvassing you use its sole purpose is to collect information. The PICX system is a simple but effective method of collecting information and using that information to run a successful election campaign. Remember there is no need to use a high street commercial printer as everything in the PICX System campaign can be printed on your own personal computer. Thus keeping the cost down.

But, before you start just give a few minutes to plan. Firstly how long do you need to run an effective campaign? To calculate this you need to know how many houses are there in your ward and how many workers can you rely on. On average 10 loyal workers should be able to complete a PICX System campaign for a ward with 5,000 houses in about 4 weeks (weather permitting).

Don't forget the leaflets. If you intend to deliver a pre-election leaflet it should be circulated no earlier than 5 weeks before polling day and the Election Address 1 week before polling day. This should be done without interrupting the canvassing. It's a good idea to print some 'Sorry you were out' leaflets so your canvassers can post one through the letterboxes when no one answers the door. **Remember your imprint is a legal requirement.**

When you put in your nomination papers at the Town Hall's Election Office they will give you a Register of Electors for the Ward you are contesting. This register is an important part of the campaign toolbox. It tells you who are entitled to vote and their very important Polling Number. The Register is simply a list of people in address order with their Polling Number.

Work as a team rather than allocating one street to one canvasser. The former is more fun and the latter can be soul-destroying. So, if you want to keep your team of canvassers happy, work as a team one street at a time. First of all printout as many Canvass Cards as you need for each of your canvassers. It is a good idea to use a different canvass card for each street but not essential.

No matter which method of canvassing you are using the spiel is more or less the same. For example, "Hello I am canvassing on behalf of *name of candidate* the independent candidate, can he/she count on your vote?" Record the answer in the Promises column of the Canvass Card.

Then ask, "Do you need a lift to the polling station or would you prefer a postal/proxy vote?" Record the answer but remember that postal/proxy vote applications have a deadline date for each election. If a lift is required note the time. If they sound really keen ask if they would display a window or garden poster and if so give them one. All of the above should be recorded in the 'Other Info' column of the Canvass Card.

Postal voters have a high percentage turnout but cannot vote at the polling station so need to be marked as voted on the Promise Card.

Your team of canvassers should have one person, the canvass team leader, with the Promise Card. The canvass team leader will have a copy of the Register of Electors and instruct each canvasser of the name of the voter at each address in the street. After the street has been canvassed the canvass team leader will transfer all the names, addresses and polling numbers of all the people who have promised to vote for you onto the Promise Card. As it is important to list the promises in polling number numerical order, it may be better to transfer the promises back at your base but more efficient if you can do it there and then before moving on to the next street.

Requests for lifts to the polling station may be transferred to the Car List at the same time and put into time order for use on Polling Day.

However, requests for postal/proxy vote applications should be dealt with immediately; therefore a supply of application forms should be taken on the canvass with you, which you will have obtained from the Elections Office.

On Polling Day you will need one person at each of the polling stations in your ward. Their job will be to ask the voters as they arrive at the polling station for their polling number and note it on the Number Card. Most voters give it willingly but some are not quite so cooperative. You **cannot** demand it so just wish them a nice day and forget them. From time to time the Number Card needs to be sent to your base so the polling numbers of the voters who have voted can be crossed off the Promise Card. This is how you can tell who has voted and more importantly who has not.

Make a second copy of the Promise Card and keep it updated too, for when you start the 'knock up'. Later in the day when all the lifts have been done your cars can take the 2nd copy of the Promise Card and call on the voters who have promised to vote for you but have not voted. Offer them a lift to the Polling Station. It is important that the person collecting polling numbers at the polling station continues until close of poll and the Promise Card/s is/are continually updated.

That is the PICX System of maximising your vote. Easy isn't it. Good Luck!