



R.T.C.

ACTION PACKET

Introduction:

This purpose of this manual is to equip Massachusetts Republican Town Committees (RTCs) with the tools they need to build their committee and elect Republicans. Meeting for the sake of having a meeting is unproductive and will actually discourage people from getting involved. The purpose of a meeting is to collectively develop a plan and then execute the plan after the meeting – a meeting is not a substitute for action.

It was once said, “If computers get too powerful, we can organize them into a committee - that will do them in.” Convert your Republican Town Committee into a Republican Town Campaign.

Always think of your organization as a campaign – write a campaign plan, set goals, establish benchmarks to track progress, and give specific instructions on how your campaign members can meet those benchmarks. The committee mentality is lethargic and gives a false sense of accomplishment by simply showing up to a meeting. A campaign is action and it’s important to remind those involved that there is a lot of work to do and little time (especially as Republicans in Massachusetts.)

Below are 15 steps to help you reach out to your community and elect more Republicans. The first three are **The Basics**, which we want every RTC to complete, and the remaining 12 are **The Basics Plus**, which we encourage every RTC to complete.

THE BASICS

1. CONTACT EVERY REPUBLICAN

Contact every registered Republican in your town and ask for their financial support at least once each year. (Even better idea – also contact the independents who have voted in recent Republican primaries) Re-solicit known donors at least one additional time each year.

Lesson: Republicans, and Republican minded independents are not going to reach out to you – you have to reach out to them. By contacting them every year, they know they are not alone, even in a blue state – and they will be more likely to be engaged in election years because of you reaching out to them. You will also build a list of known donors who will also be able to help Republican candidates.

Action Item: Use Voter Vault to mail and call the Republicans and independents that vote Republican in your town, asking them to contribute. **Be sure that your RTC is registered with the Office of Campaign and Political Finance before you start. You can call OCPF at 617-727-8352. www.mass.gov/ocpf**

2. SPONSOR OR PARTICIPATE IN A COMMUNITY OR CHARITY ACTIVITY - PROJECT GOOD WILL

Show a genuine interest for improving the quality of life in your community beyond participating in elections every other year. As Republicans, we are the true conservationists – we not only want to conserve our national creed of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness, but we also deeply appreciate the *local* communities that we are members of. For instance, the Shirley RTC is sending care packages to our military overseas and the Sandwich RTC donated to an Organ Transplant Program for a local child. Here are a few further ideas on how to be involved:

- ✓ Sponsor toys for tots.
- ✓ Sponsor/ participate in a river clean up day
- ✓ Clean a baseball field.
- ✓ Promote a dialogue event with students and seniors.
- ✓ Clean the town common.
- ✓ Sponsor a book drive for the library.
- ✓ Assist at an animal shelter.
- ✓ Sponsor Care Packages for Soldiers
- ✓ Other activities of your choice.

There may be a specific need that is unique to your town. Don't hesitate on mobilizing your RTC on fixing that need. Your RTC should conduct a minimum of one community event per year.

Lesson: Simple acts can have grand effects, and the people in your community need to see your good actions. Also, you as an organization you need to enhance your visibility. This will make your voice in the community stronger and more credible.

Action Item: Determine what is needed in your town, contact your town if you need permission to work on town property, and contact the local press to get the word out so that "more people can help you in this effort." For tips on how to write a press release and with going forward with *Project Good Will* please call us at 617-523-5005.

3. DONATE FIFTY CENTS FOR EVERY REPUBLICAN IN YOUR TOWN TO REPUBLICAN CANDIDATES

Since you are now viewing your RTC as a campaign it's important to raise money as a campaign. Campaigns never stop raising money and neither should you. Too many RTC's only have funds as a result of dues and this is not enough. Raising money can help your RTC pay for campaign mailings, events, or supplies for any projects that you want to do. Here are a few ways to raise money:

Donate at least 50 cents for every registered Republican in your community to the Republican candidate(s) of your choice. For example, 2000 Republicans X .50 = \$1000. that your committee will commit to donating to the Republican candidates of your choice.

There are several ways you can raise money

- ✓ Your letter to all Republicans (see #1 above)
- ✓ Letters to your known Republican donors
- ✓ Host a low overhead fundraising event, such as a house party, or a pancake breakfast at the local Elks or Knights of Columbus Hall, etc.
- ✓ Personal calls from RTC Chairman to Republican donors

The purpose of a RTC is to elect Republicans and these candidates need your help. You can divide the funds in any way you like, and donate to the Republican candidates of your choice. But you must be donating at least 50 cents per registered Republican per two year cycle to candidates.

In the 2006 election, the Sandwich RTC donated over \$3000 to Republican candidates. Also, the Beverly RTC paid for a campaign office with phone lines that all Republican candidates could use.

Lesson: Candidates need to deliver their message to the voters through direct mail and phone calls. This costs a lot of money. Your Town Committee contribution can help pay for these costs.

Action Item: Be sure that your RTC is registered with the Office of Campaign and Political Finance before you start. You can call OCPF at 617-727-8352. Use Voter Vault to determine how many Republicans you have in your city or town and then calculate how much you need to donate. Call the MassGOP at 617-523-5005 to discuss ways you can implement your fundraising strategy.

THE BASICS PLUS

4. IDENTIFY VOTERS

When Republican candidates run for office, they will often have to start from scratch in identifying who their likely supporters are.

You can start building the coordinates of your town right now for future Republican campaigns to use. By using Voter Vault, you can keep track of the voters that you identify and then local, state, and federal Republican candidates can benefit from your voter ID by contacting those voters with the messages on issues of concern to them.

What is identifying a voter? Basically, there are issues and there are *VOTING issues*. Remember, voters may have opinions on numerous issues, but only one or two issues will dictate how they will pull the lever at the ballot box. These are voting issues. Your job is to find the voting issue(s) of each voter in your town to build the coordinates for future Republican Campaigns. Who are the Education Voters, Health Care Voters, Environment Voters, 2nd Amendment Voters, etc?

This technique is used on you every time you watch television. When you watch a football game, you will not see commercials for female skin products. Instead, you will find commercials for Craftsman tools, Ford Trucks, Coors Light, and Rogaine. The same principle applies with politics. Do you want our Republican candidates wasting time and money sending campaign literature about education to voters that only care about high taxes? Of course not, we want our Republican candidates to be as well informed and equipped as possible to discuss the right issue with the right voter.

Lesson: Don't force candidates to have to build their own coordinates of your town. You should do this work to enable the candidate to focus on raising money so they can adequately contact these voters with the appropriate message.

Action Item: Plan your Voter ID strategy: how many active voters are in your town in Voter Vault that have yet to be tagged with an affiliation? Set out to ID all of their voting issues using phone banks and record this intel in Voter Vault so campaigns

can use it. Call the Mass GOP right now at 617-523-5005 and ask for the Political Director to get you started with voter ID.

5. COLLECT SIGNATURES

There is nothing more grassroots than the art of collecting signatures. Whether you are collecting to get candidates on the ballot, or for initiative petitions – collecting signatures is an important activity. Ballot initiatives are great for voter id, and mobilizing voters to get to the polls on Election Day – but neither can be done without RTC's being actively involved the process of collecting signatures.

- For Republican candidates, a signature must be certified for it to count. Each nomination paper has to represent only 1 city or town.
- For Republican candidates, only registered Republicans and Unenrolled voters will count as certified.
- For ballot initiatives, each page must represent only 1 city or town, but any registered voter will count as a certified signature.
- Keep nomination papers clean, and do not put any extraneous marks on them.
- Photocopies must be the same size and same color and the backs must be photocopied right-side up.

Lesson: Republican candidates should never have to waste precious dollars paying for their signatures because they don't have the volunteers to get them on the ballot.

Action Item: Call the MassGOP at 617-523-5005 to request the Guide on Collecting Signatures, and be prepared to collect signatures when the time comes. (Fall 2007 for state wide initiative petition, Spring 2008 for candidates and local non-binding referendum.)

6. ORGANIZE ONLINE

The internet can be a powerful tool for your campaign. In some instances Republicans utilize the web better than the Democrats and in others the Democrats do. A website can only serve as a website, but a blog can serve as both! Please refer to the RTC Guide to Simple Blogging for more details, but here are a few tips.

- Know your audience, your RTC site is mainly for activists, not voters.
- It needs to attract new activists.
- It needs to enable current activists to organize and have a voice.
- It should have links to neighboring RTC's, your County Club, MassGOP and center-right groups that you like.
- It needs to be updated often.

- It can and should shape and influence local debate.
- Use photos/videos to capture short action campaign moments of your members.

Using the internet for your RTC is important in many ways. It allows you to give credit where credit is due among your members, thank them and post their pictures (this will attract your activists to keep coming back). It allows you to inform your activists of new projects or update them with progress being made with a current project. Also, it's important to be a voice in the local community on issues and your blog is a tool to do this.

Lesson: Become visible, empower your members to organize, give credit and recognition.

Action Item: Read the RTC Guide to Simple Blogging, call 617-523-5005 if you need to have one mailed or emailed to you. A free and easy site to use for your RTC blog is blogger at www.blogger.com and an example RTC blog set up by the Mass GOP can be found at www.smithvillerepublicans.blogspot.com

7. REGISTER REPUBLICANS

Find out the percentage breakdown of Republicans, Democrats, and Unenrolleds in your city, town or ward. Then, set a goal of registering X amount of voters by X date. Typically, people are much more in tune with politics before an election so it will be easier to register them during the time leading up to an election.

- a. Two months before the cut-off date for registering for an election, start contacting unregistered voters. Target those unregistered voters who live with a registered Republican (or Independent who voted in a recent Republican primary). You can obtain this information by comparing your local census with your Voter Vault list and anyone who is in the census but not in Voter Vault is not registered.
- b. For people newly moving into a community, the sooner the contact the better, even if an election is still several months away. A card welcoming them to the community, or an RTC member knocking on their door welcoming them, and giving them a voter registration card and a letter from the RTC is even better.
- c. For those people about to turn 18, the Shirley RTC is sending a birthday card and asking them to register Republican (even if the closest election is still some time away.) This is extremely effective, does *not* cost a lot of money, but does take discipline and planning to do on a regular basis. You can obtain the local census from your town or city hall and this will include the names of those that are 17.

Registering voters is not only a great way to increase the number of Republicans in your town but also a way to stunt the base vote for Democrats. Have fun with this project and create a system of rewarding those that exceed their individual goals, and create a chart/graph to track progress.

Each RTC member should be given plenty of voter registration cards (you can obtain these from your town hall, the Secretary of State (617) 727-2828, or from the MassGOP, at 617-523-5005.)

Lesson: If every RTC had Republican Registration program, Massachusetts would be in much better shape. It begins with you and your town – “All politics is local.”

Action Item: Request the Voter Registration Guide from the MassGOP by calling 617-523-5005. Get the percentage breakdown of your City, Town, Ward, find a reasonable goal to attain, and assign personal goals to members. Get the census list from your local clerk to contact high school students about to turn 18. Read the local paper for real estate transfers to identify and welcome newcomers to town.

8. RUN CANDIDATES

Democrats run for local offices such as the Select-Board, School Committee, Board of Health etc. and Republicans tend to stay busy within their own life. As a result, when an opportunity presents itself (open seats) the Democrat candidate is starting with the advantage by having experience, name id, organization, and a donor base. Republicans need to run candidates at the local level *now*.

Republicans too often run first time candidates for a legislative or federal seat and thus the challenges that come on the campaign trail can be a steep learning curve.

Make it your goal for your RTC to run candidates for local offices so that they can be groomed and trained. Also, having a title in the town gives them a great excuse to show up to town events and meetings and soon enough, they will become a “somebody” in the town.

In these town elections, not only will your candidate gain experience but your RTC members will also get valuable training on the importance of Voter ID, GOTV and the campaign process. Even if your local Republican office holders do not run for higher office, they will be able to offer greater assistance to those Republicans who do.

Lesson: Recruiting local candidates will not only help the candidate and the Republican Party in the future, but it will help your team with gaining valuable knowledge right now.

Action Item: Find the dates for your next town election and begin recruiting. Young members tend to be most idealistic and passionate and older people tend to have more time – these are two good pools to find candidates.

9. CHALLENGE INCUMBENT DEMOCRATS

Considering that most of the state is Democrat chances are you have at least one Democrat State Representative or State Senator as your incumbent. Never miss an opportunity to point out the incumbent Democrat who is neglecting his district, or even voting against it (This happens more often than you might expect). Watch closely for the following red flags:

- ✓ Failing to show up to a public ceremony/event.
- ✓ Failing to attend town meetings, school committee meetings.
- ✓ A specific vote.
- ✓ Voting too often with the Speaker/Senate President, and against their district.
- ✓ Failing to show up for important or a large number of votes
- ✓ Failing to respond to constituent request.
- ✓ Never accessible to meet with constituents (no district office hours.)
- ✓ Forgot or renege on campaign promises

You can challenge your Democrat incumbent in two ways:

- 1) Learn how to write official press releases from the proper way so your committee will be viewed as credible with the reporters – you can send press releases from your RTC email so there is no need for you to purchase a fax, or spend money on postage. Make sure that what you are doing is “newsworthy”, and if you are unsure, call the State Committee and ask.
- 2) Have individuals write letters to the editor in your local papers criticizing the Democrat incumbent with non-partisan, specific reasons. It’s best not to have the Chairman of the RTC write these letters since it will invite the Democrat to respond and dismiss the legitimate criticism as “unfortunate partisanship.”

Even failing to return a phone call from a constituent is grounds for a letter to the editor

For example, a letter to the editor could read something like this:

Dear Editor, I'm disappointed to say that I never got my phone call returned from State Senator Smith's office when I called on March 6th at 3:30 pm. My 76 year old mother is eligible for a handicapped placard and for weeks now we can't seem to contact anyone at the RMV so we figured State Senator Smith could help us navigate the bureaucracy. It's frustrating to call Senator Smith and to receive only silence.

Also, email can be VERY effective when a passionate, idealistic legislative aide returns an inappropriate email to you. Many times the tone and language of the email seems more fitting for a student socialist group than a professional office in the State House.

Lesson: Serving in office is a privilege. If your incumbent Democrat doesn't treat it that way, point it out to the voters.

Action Item: Watch how your incumbent Democrat is voting. Find any legitimate reason to have a dialogue with the incumbent Democrat. Any emails sent should be saved in your "sent box" and keep track of the date/time of phone calls made and any calls that they returned. As Chairman of your RTC, you should develop a friendly relationship with the local papers. Yes, the local papers may have a liberal bias but don't reveal that you believe this to be so. Let them know that you are available for any counter point to the Democrat incumbent. Ask them for the correct emails to send your RTC press releases to.

10. TRAIN YOUR MEMBERS

Every hour given to your organization from a member should be spent the best possible way – we have too few resources to spend time carelessly. Be sure that your members know the importance of any project before you ask them to participate – why are we doing voter ID, *Register Republicans*, or *Project Good Will*? Don't assume that people know how to campaign or how to make phone calls at a phone bank. Getting your troops to make phone calls will be one of your most difficult tasks so be prepared on educating them on the importance of it, and training them on the phone (what to say, how to respond, give them a script etc.)

Too often, in campaigns, what activists believe is the most important thing may actually be the least important. For instance, consider a stand-out (holding campaign signs at a busy intersection for several hours) for local legislative race. It's a good activity in that it brings your troops together and you build comradery among them (of course you gain minimal name id for the candidate at the same time.) The best thing that a stand-out produces is not the visibility of the name but the thing that people don't see – relationship building. Sign holding is a secondary campaign activity in terms of candidate promotion activities for the following reasons:

- 1) X% Some people driving by are not old enough to vote.
- 2) X% Some people driving by are not registered to vote.
- 3) X% Some people driving by are registered but don't actually vote.
- 4) X% Some people driving by are not citizens and thus can't vote.
- 5) X% Some voters driving by live in a neighboring district.
- 6) X% Some voters are already committed for/against you.
- 7) X% Some voters drove by and could not read the signs.
- 8) X% Some voters that are undecided read your sign.

Ask yourself this – how many of the "beeps" or "thumbs-up" do you misinterpret as number 8? The majority of your "beeps" come from 1-7. And, even when the rare

occurrence of instance 8 happening, is it that valuable for 15 of your volunteers to spend 3 hours doing (a total of 45 campaign volunteer hours)?

Beyond the social interaction benefits from sign holding, this activity is only good in the political sense as a follow-up to a primary campaign activity such as phone banking, or a mailing. If the campaign called a thousand people in Smithtown and then held signs after the phone bank in downtown Smithtown, the stand-out is a good follow up to reinforce the important phone calls. If the campaign did a mailing that dropped on Tuesday in Smithtown, holding signs on Tuesday/Wednesday is a good follow up to the mailer.

Sign holding is a secondary campaign activity that should be done in conjunction with primary campaign activities - it is not in itself a complete activity.

Just remember that a stand-out is not a complete activity and make sure your troops understand this as well – otherwise they will leave a sign holding event with a false sense of accomplishment thinking they earned 25 votes because they got 25 “beeps” when in fact they did not earn 1 vote.

This is one example of how we can be smarter with our troops and ensure our time is spent wisely.

Lesson: Time is limited, make sure you are getting the most out of the hours given to you by your team.

Action Item: Call the MassGOP 617-523-5005 to see when the next training will occur, or call your County Club and ask them to sponsor a training with the MassGOP. You can request the Political Director to conduct a Voter Vault training for your RTC.

11. KEEP MORALE HIGH

Institute one or two social events each year, such as a December Christmas or holiday party, or a summer cook out, etc., to thank your activists. When picking a social event, make sure it doesn't interfere with the election calendar, and the work that needs to be done electing Republican candidates.

People generally become activists for one of four reasons.

- 1) Party loyalists.
- 2) Driven by issue(s).
- 3) For friendships/networking.
- 4) For career path.

In any one of these cases, it's important to keep your team happy. Plan certain social events where your team does not always come together for the purpose of licking envelopes and making phone calls. Social events are great opportunities to collect email addresses, expand membership and meet new contacts.

Lesson: Entertain your troops and they will return to fight another day.

Action Item: Talk with your members and see which event would be best to plan – you may want to plan a BBQ for this summer.

12. USE VOTER VAULT

We have a tremendous advantage over the Democrats with Voter Vault. This program is a multi-million dollar database given to you for free. As the current Chair, you may not be knowledgeable with computers – that’s okay. You can nominate a person in your RTC as the “Voter Vault Director.” Voter Vault enables you to:

- ✓ ID Voters in a usable database.
- ✓ Conduct a GOTV operation.
- ✓ Mail donor lists for mailings.
- ✓ Call any voter demographic.
- ✓ Easily print walking maps based on your desired criteria.
- ✓ Register non-Republicans that are likely to become Republican.
- ✓ Distinguish voters from non voters.
- ✓ Build database of GOP yard sign locations.
- ✓ Tag GOP donors as “GOP Donor.”

Lesson: We have an advantage over the Democrats, use this incredible tool to build your town, and invite new activists. Also, Voter Vault tells you who the voters are. All voters are people, but not all people are voters! Always remember this important fact – otherwise you will get off track and waste precious resources.

Action Item: Call the MassGOP at 617-523-5005 to request a Voter Vault Username and Password if you currently do not have one and read the user manual produced by the MassGOP.

13. WORK WITH FRIENDS

Reach out to those that are likely to work with you. Recruit your friends to help you first, regardless of their party affiliation. After they have helped you, with a mailing, an event, a petition, etc., it will be much easier to recruit them to the RTC, and you will have already accomplished much. Also, you may have Republican friendly organizations in your town such as an anti-tax increase group. It’s critical to keep these groups informed on what you are doing and make sure you are available to help them with anything they are doing. Also, your County Club exists to help you and you should be in communication with them. Make sure you notify your County Club of any activities that you are doing so they can promote it as well, or provide reinforcements if you need help.

Lesson: There is strength in numbers and it’s important to team up with those that are willing to help you. Democrats do this all the time by teaming up with unions, environmental groups, and other “social justice” organizations.

Action Item: Introduce yourself to your County Club and other local groups, invite them to attend your next meeting and build a relationship – get their contact info and find out what they have planned.

14. EXPAND AND IDENTIFY MEMBERSHIP

Once you learn how to use voter vault, you can contact certain demographics that are more likely to join a RTC. First, you may want to contact Republicans that are 4/4 which means they voted in all 4 previous elections. These are very active voting Republicans and are obviously very in-tune with politics at both the local, state and national level. Unenrolled voters that normally choose a Republican primary ballot are also a great group to contact. This group most likely identifies themselves behaviorally as Republican, yet are not registered Republican.

Lesson: Voters tell you who they are - you just have to listen to them.

Action Item: Set a date where your RTC can contact these voters with either a phone call and/or a letter.

15. WRITE A CAMPAIGN PLAN

The more activities you are conducting, the more you need a written campaign plan. If you schedule your activities well in advance, you can distribute them to your members, and they can plan accordingly. Just like in a campaign plan for office, estimate the costs of any of your activities, as well as how much you will raise in funds, and how you will raise them. Also, estimate how much volunteer time you will need, so you can also ask accordingly.

Use a calendar to plan on when you need to make calls for volunteers, whether it be to stuff a mailing, register voters, or your project good will.

Lesson: Writing and executing a good plan will accomplish more than operating without a plan.

Action Item: Write out your campaign plan now, until the end of 2008.

Conclusion:

In order to succeed at any of these projects, it's critical to reiterate the importance of following the following steps:

- Set Goals – What do you want to accomplish, and by what date? If you don't set goals, you won't achieve success.

- Establish Benchmarks – To reach our goals, what is required from each member? If you can't track your progress, you won't be able to change your tactics to ensure success.
- Specific Instructions - explain in detail to your members *how* they can achieve their personal goals. Not everyone is knowledgeable about voter id, GOTV, or fundraising; teach them what they need to succeed.

The staff at the Massachusetts Republican Party is here to assist you and would be happy to speak with you if you have any questions or concerns.

Paid for by the Massachusetts Republican Party
The Honorable Peter G. Torkildsen, Chairman