

Bird - Dog Trainer's Cookbook

2014 Edition



Purpose

Bird-dogging can be a useful component of a political education/campaign. The purpose of this guide is to assist trainers running workshops that help participants improve their skills/ability to:

- Let candidates (and office-holders) know what are the issues that matter to the community;
- Find out where candidates stand on the issues;
- Inform other members of the public who are present; and
- Insert messages into media coverage of campaigns.

This is accomplished through a progression of interactive exercises during which participants learn how to better articulate their message in a variety of campaign contexts.

The training can also help activists be more effective as lobbyists, union members, interviewees, and in other citizenship roles.

Preparation

- Talk to organizers of event so that you have an idea of what kind of group it is and how many people to expect.
- Bring flipcharts, power barcodes, other props, handouts on issues, "sign for bird-dogs" handouts, sign-in sheets
- Each workshop should have two facilitators. In the exercises, they can rotate who is the "candidate" and who is in other roles. The non-candidate should be the discussion leader.
- If you don't have a co-trainer, you can do this by yourself with help of volunteers. Be sure to ask them before the workshop starts.

