

# INTRO TO FIELD AND TARGETING

Version 1.0

✓ VOTE  
◀ RUN  
★ LEAD

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After finding your win number, the next step is establishing who your campaign will be to vote for your candidate. While it may seem like it's important to talk to everyone, you only have so many days to reach voters. Since campaigns have a hard deadline, Election Day, it's important to be intentional about who you are connecting with and how you are connecting with them.

## Terms

- **Targeted Voters:** The specific people your campaign is focused on reaching out to.
- **Universe:** The political jargon used to refer to the specific group of voters your campaign will target and engage with on the campaign trail.
- **Hyper-targeting:** Targeted smaller groups of people within your targeted universe for a specific tactic, reason, or goal.
- **High Propensity Voters:** Voters who cast ballots in almost every election, creating a consistent pattern of voting.
- **Mid Propensity Voters:** Voters who cast their ballots regularly, but more often in national elections than in local races.
- **Low Propensity Voters:** Voters who cast their ballots infrequently, maybe during significant presidential elections, but not necessarily in midterms or local races.
- **"No Data" Voters:** Voters who are tagged in databases as "No Data." Classifications similar to "no data," are often assumptions and analyses that occur after a person votes, however, when people don't have a voting history, the system will flag people as "no data."

## Best Practices

- A good rule of thumb, your universe should be significantly larger than your win number. If you invite 100 people to a birthday party, how many will show up? While Election Day may be ever-present on your mind, it may not be a priority for other people. If your universe is twice the size of your win number, you know that even if a few people in your universe forget to vote, it will not impact your campaign as drastically.
- [Do research on your district ahead of time.](#) Researching the district can provide context on who lives in your district, but maybe outside of your neighborhood, and who the electorate is for your election.

- Researching previous elections and demographic data can direct strategy and provide insight into allocating resources, and what campaign tactics will be most effective.

## Building Your Targeted Universe

### Super Voters– Want to Mobilize

The first component of targeting is capturing super voters, individuals who have a pattern of voting in similar elections to yours. Super voters, more officially referred to as “high propensity voters,” are the people we know for a fact are voting based on their history at the ballot box. Since these voters are likely to vote in your election, your team needs to be touching and connecting with these households.

- Think: who does your campaign need to mobilize?
- Example:
  - Voters who have voted in three of the last three primary/general elections, or three of the previous four primary/general elections who are aligned with your political party.
  - Note: High propensity voters skew towards an older electorate since they have had more time and opportunities to cast their ballots.

### Mid Propensity Voters– Want to Activate

The second step is looking at who your campaign needs to activate. Is there a larger group of people who vote consistently in more significant elections and may vote in this election if the campaign reaches out to them?

- Think: Who is likely to vote based on the current landscape or is becoming more politically active?
- Examples:
  - Voters who consistently vote in presidential or Presidential Primaries, but have voted in one or two of the last midterm elections.
  - Voters who are younger, but have voted in two of the last presidential elections and potentially the previous midterm cycle.

## **Your Unique Universe -- Building the Electorate**

The third step, which is entirely up to you and may depend on time, budget, and candidate, is who does your candidate inspire? Is there a unique quality or aspect of your campaign that would push low propensity voters to rally behind you?

Consider what can give you an edge over your opponent and who your campaign can bring to the table. Through this step, think about what demographics in your district are often overlooked and who is likely to vote for you if your campaign reached out to them

Within this third step, you may find that the group of voters you would like to reach are tagged in a voter database as “No Data,” which is when your database does not have enough information to provide insight. To best target people who fall into this tag, we recommend filtering by other aspects, such as by precinct or demographic data.

## **Hyper-targeting with Your Universe**

Hyper-targeting can be an impactful practice in utilizing your campaign resources effectively and prioritizing who you are reaching and when. Two of the ways we can target within a set universe are by vote type and by the tactic or demographic.

### **Hyper-targeting by Vote Type**

When looking at the universe, your campaign can further target votes by assessing how people vote. While the timeline and vote type may change from state to state, you can assess how your targeted universe votes- how many people in your universe vote by mail-in ballots, or vote early?

If early voting or absentee voting is available in your state, there is a different timeline for people casting their ballots. Since absentee and early voters cast their ballots before election day, your campaign can prioritize reaching those voters first or adding an additional “touch” or engagement to further persuade voters. We recommend mapping out the deadlines for your district and establishing goals around how and when you plan to reach these voters.

## Hyper-targeting by Tactic or Demographic

With your campaign budget in mind, your team can target by either, or both, tactic or demographic. After establishing your universe, we recommend breaking down the demographics and reflecting on how your campaign can best reach people. Understanding how your campaign can meet people where they are will consistently increase the impact of your conversations.

Examples:

- If your targeted universe maintains a younger electorate or apartment complexes, would it be more time and cost-efficient to use a texting platform or send an additional mailer, especially, if it's difficult to reach people with canvassing?
- If your targeted universe skews older, could it be more beneficial to focus phonebanks on older voters while your canvassing programs will reach your entire universe?
- If your targeted universe includes a number of voters who speak other languages, will it be impactful if your campaign sends in-language mailers?
- If you identify an area or demographic where your campaign is struggling to reach or persuade a specific group, would it be impactful to add an additional mailer, phonebank, house party, or
- If your district is very rural and canvassing may be time-consuming and difficult, how can the campaign shift tactics so there is less of an emphasis on canvassing?