

# **We absolutely have to stop buying our own mule over and over again!**

Dennis Sutton

I have watched, and even participated, in developing canvass, phone, or text lists from our Votebuilder voter database, where we selected registered “D’s” or Leaning “D’s” in one mode or another for our outreach activities. We told ourselves we were just selecting “warm” leads to get our canvassers trained and later we would come back for the MAGA’s and the other “R’s.” But there never seems to be enough time, money, or energy to actually make that happen.

Those warm leads, the “D’s” or Leaning “D’s” are the “mules” we already own and are in our corral already! Why are we wasting any energy, time, or money selling them on our candidates. We already own their votes. The only time we should be spending any of our time, money, or energy on them is during GOTV (Get Out The Vote), and then IDP has tools and budget to help with that project, and it shouldn’t happen until the polls are open – the last month before election day.

We, both the Party and the Candidates, should be using our treasure for everyone else. THEY are the “game” we hunt. We need to be knocking on the Red and Unaffiliated doors, not the Blue ones. Sure there will be more resistance there, but that is the only place we might be able to find new votes. And without new votes, we get what we got last time – the booby prize, and a happy GOP. We need to be walking through their orchard, knocking some of their low hanging fruit off their branches and putting those fruits in OUR bag. The catch will be fewer and harder to come by, but any gains we make will be real gains. Not pretend progress.

If you don’t feel that we have the messages that will adequately compete at the doorknob with the spiel from the opposition, then you need to get involved with developing our message so you have the weapons you are comfortable confronting the opposition’s monsters with. Our values are far more powerful than theirs, but we have to be able to present, defend, and win our arguments. No one wins wars practicing on their own troops, they fight their opposition. We should too. It’s the only way to “take prisoners and convert the heathens.”

And our candidates need to stop treating their campaigns like job applications. This isn’t the place for a resume’ or a litany of affirmations. Sure identify your bonafides of how long you’ve been a neighbor, if it something to brag about. And introduce your family, if you have one. And, if you have a particular skill, trade, or experience that is directly relevant to the post you are campaigning for, use it. But none of these attributes will get you elected – everyone else has them too. You will be elected solely on your vision of what needs to be changed to make a better future for you and your neighbors. Make sure your constituents know they can count on you to slay their dragons, and that you will defend them. Take the fight to your opposition, prosecute your differences! But also take a lesson from Kamala and Tim, have fun doing it. Be Bold! Be Brave!

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