

1948

FINANCE WORKERS HANDBOOK



LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
726 Jackson Place, N. W. Washington 6, D. C.

FINANCE DRIVE CALENDAR

Training Meetings:

Report Meetings:

Appointments:

Price 5¢ each

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of

FINANCE WORKERS' HANDBOOK

League of Women Voters of N. Y.

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AM I IMPORTANT?

For the period of this finance drive you are the carefully chosen official representative of the League of Women Voters, Local, State and National.

You feel your responsibility keenly, of course. Your faith in the League, your conviction that the League's job today is one of utmost importance to your country give you a profound desire to discharge this responsibility creditably.

* * *

LET'S take a look at what there is to do . . .

The groundwork has been painstakingly laid by your finance chairman and her committee. Many hours were spent gathering lists of prospects, transcribing information on file cards, estimating possibilities; hours more on the phone hand-picking you and the other workers, setting up the machinery for smooth organization, that everyone's work will be easier and more satisfying.

Arrangements are made to help you prepare yourself—so your first stint is to attend the training meetings as scheduled, to appear promptly, and to participate in the discussion. Even though you may be an experi-

enced person your presence at these meetings is essential; it never does any harm to "brush up" and your being there will be a help to the new workers.

You will be asked to take a limited number of prospect cards so that you may not be overburdened and can do a really good piece of work; however, if you cover your cards easily or fail in any of the contacts it will be good of you to take some additional names. The drive will last only three weeks, so be sure to get off to a quick start. There are often delays beyond your control in completing your calls.

During the period of the drive there will be scheduled report meetings. They are IMPORTANT. Don't miss them. They are intended not alone to let everyone know how the drive is progressing but also for answering any questions that have come up. This is the time you get the fun of a campaign and contribute to the esprit de corps.

Be sure to have your report envelope ready to turn in at each of these meetings.

After the drive is over an official "thank-you" note will be sent to each contributor by your president or treasurer . . . but a personal note from you in addition will help cement friendship.

Be sure you have reported on your prospect cards the donors' interests as an aid to the Finance Committee in cultivating them throughout the year.

BUT HOW DO I GET IN TOUCH WITH MY PROSPECTS?

You may simply drop into his office. (This is often done in large cities as well as small towns.) If you choose this method you may have to "drop" a number of times before you find him.

You may telephone for an appointment. If you do this it is helpful to discover in advance the name of his secretary . . . or to have a mutual friend telephone for you.

Be cautious in the use of letters asking for an appointment or telling of the drive. Experience has shown this just does not work. It seldom produces an appointment. It may bring in a token check which cuts off your chance for a sizable contribution. It often locks the door against a personal approach. In the rare cases where a letter is necessary, however, the following is a good example of what to say. It may also be used as a guide for a telephone appointment.

"Knowing of your interest in public affairs, I am taking the liberty of asking you to grant me a brief interview as I should like to enlist your interest in the League of Women Voters. You perhaps know what it is doing to create citizen responsibility for our government and to stimulate thinking on the vital issues which face us today.

"I shall call you for an appointment and hope it will be convenient for you to see me."

BUT WHAT DO I SAY WHEN INTERVIEWING A PROSPECT?

INTRODUCE yourself and the League in a brief sentence or two. If you have learned in advance something of his interests your next step may be to show him how the League touches upon things that concern him. But don't be long-winded about it; give him an opportunity to tell you a thing or two. The chances are that he will be so interesting that your mind will click right along with his and you'll say exactly the right things at the right moments.

Regardless of what special interest he may have, every wide-awake citizen is deeply concerned with the future of this country. The League's year-round Voters Service tied up as it is with the great issues of the day, is probably your best story to illustrate not only the League's high purpose but also its methods of organization for such a comprehensive job.

Make it clear to your prospect that you are asking for support not for your local League alone but for the work of the League throughout the state and the nation. It might not seem important to him to contribute generously to a "woman's club." It *will* seem important to contribute generously to a nationwide organization which achieves its aim: **Let the people know; Make the people care; Help the people act.**

And you might let him know that no other organization is working in quite this way . . . with no axe to

grind—no party drums to beat—nothing but the public interest and the defense of individual freedom on its banner.

He will probably be interested to know that League funds are spent only for League work. The League operates with a minimum of paid staff; most of its work is done by able volunteers. If these volunteers were compensated for their talent and hours of work the League would have an enormously increased budget. Funds contributed to the League are translated directly into results like these: another section of the public becomes conscious of its franchise; the work of another public official improves because of constructive support; another able person is inspired to enter government service; another piece of grab-bag legislation stalled; another County Budget streamlined . . . and ultimately an awakened electorate, vindicating "government by the people."

In this kit you will have sample broadsides or editorials or copies of good League publications. Make a choice of what to put into his hands but don't overload him.

Don't recite things to him. *Don't argue with him.* Just be your own natural, sincere self and regard your prospect as a person of high intelligence, deep human understanding, with a capacity for excellent judgment. He must rate pretty high or you wouldn't be approaching him at all.

If he asks how much you are expecting him to give, don't be apologetic or apprehensive; go ahead and

suggest the sum you had in mind. Tell him what your goal for the drive is; tell him that in order to reach this amount you are counting on a certain number of gifts of this size and are hoping that his gift may be in the group. If you have grouped him with the larger donors he will be pleasantly flattered.

IF HE ASKS (*you'd be surprised how seldom he does*) *whether he may deduct this contribution from his income tax, you reply that you cannot advise him infallibly. District collectors in different parts of the country have held differently with regard to contributions to local Leagues in their districts, depending upon the activities of the League and their interpretation and application of the law to them. In 1944, the Tax Court overruled disallowance by the District Collector of a deduction of a contribution to the St. Louis League and that decision is being followed as a precedent. If no specific ruling has been made about your League, you may advise your contributor of the above fact, leaving him to be guided by his own judgment as to whether or not he will claim deduction.*

If he wants to "think it over", by all means agree—**BUT**—don't fail to go back to him at the appointed time, for if you slip up he will not be well impressed. The same follow-up may be required if he wishes to make a pledge rather than to give you his check.

BUT SUPPOSE HE WANTS TO KNOW HOW HIS CONTRIBUTION SUPPORTS ALL LEAGUE WORK?

The explanation is simple. Show him that the budget for essential national services is approximately

\$.....; that the budget for necessary state services is approximately \$.....; that these budgets are raised by the local leagues who receive these services to help them carry out the program of the League, and that your budget for local work within the community is \$..... Thus the entire financing of the League rests on the support which it receives from men and women in the communities in which it exists.

BUT WHAT IF HE REFUSES?

That is his privilege. Just make sure that you leave a pleasant impression with him. If this is accomplished, he will be watching the League at work and may be ready to contribute the next time.

* * *

BUT DON'T I NEED MORE BACKGROUND THAN THIS?

Bring a pencil with you to the training meetings. You will find that all the essential facts will be presented . . . some outstanding accomplishments of the League will be reviewed . . . difficult questions answered.

Here are some of these questions. See if you know the answers!

1. Why ask for support from non-members?
2. Is the League just another "pressure group"?
3. Why isn't the League working for "such and such"?
4. How can the League be non-partisan?
5. How does the League stimulate public thinking?

PATTERN OF THE PERFECT INTERVIEW

FIRST OF ALL

you would do well to KNOW

- League Facts
- why we ask for contributions
- how League is non-partisan
- one quotation in praise of the League

BEFORE YOU START

- you would be wise to LEARN
 - the interests of your prospect
 - his political affiliations
 - the best time to see him (get an appointment)

WHEN YOU START OUT

- put on your best hat
 - take a co-worker if you want aid and comfort
 - take samples of League publications
 - think of the League in its largest terms

WHEN YOU GET THERE

be brief—do some listening—don't argue
 emphasize the fundamental purpose of the League;
 prospects can seldom withhold approval of active citizenship
 don't feel that you must know all the answers—
 refer to League literature that you can send
don't apologize for asking for money—the League
 has no axe to grind—reveal your own conviction,
 it is a good investment of *your* time (and money).
 if you are asked to suggest the amount, *don't be timid*—it is not insulting to be thought generous.

WHEN YOU GET A CHECK

express confidence in the investment
 if contributor is a man, ask if his wife would like
 membership.
 ask if contributor would like to receive:
 state League Bulletin
 local League notices
 give check and pledge card, properly filled out, to
 Chairman promptly with any comment on inter-
 view attached.

SHOULD YOU BE REFUSED

report reasons on card, give to Chairman
 consider taking another name.

WHEN THE JOB IS DONE

JOIN IN THE CELEBRATION!

Notes