

A Short Canvass How-To: Crucial Outreach Operations from Rockaway and Beyond

Canvassing is the face to face interaction that gets the goods (raw data) and (community organization) which we can utilize.

The people we talk to are called contacts, they are the individual bridges between our organization and the neighborhood. They are not customers or clients because we are not selling or marketing anything, our organization centers around **community empowerment through mutual aid!** Canvassing is important, because when we knock on doors, the interaction we posit to the neighborhood represents the face of Occupy Sandy! A canvasser is a walking neighborhood representative so act like it! **Be conscientious, courteous and resourceful.**

A canvasser has two main tools she uses to collect data and act as a community resource while on turf, these are her RAP and her clipboard.

RAP is short for **RAPPORT**, because we aren't just getting info at doors, we are establishing a relationship with the community around us.

A RAP is a structured conversation we have with contacts to get us the data we need to establish **accountable FOLLOW UP** while enabling *freedom to CONVERSE* with an *emphasis in listening*.

A canvasser's clipboard will be armed with forms to fill out at every home on turf, flyers with resources to distribute to contacts, and up-to-date information about community meetings or volunteer sign-up.

The back of the clipboard should also display a MAP of turf or turf zones. This lets you know where you are going, and where you might have been to avoid doubling back on the same turf.

So now we've covered the point of canvassing and what tools we use to conduct it lets go over a typical canvass day

Meet with canvass coordinator to **brief** on current events and specific topics to cover with contacts.

Build clipboard: carry a strong stock of forms; 30+ is a safe number for the average canvasser unless you intend on staying out for 5+ hours. Remember to double your form numbers if current canvass records a form for vacant/not home entries.

Collect all relevant fliers, resource guides and lit to distribute to contacts. It may be cumbersome to carry a large stack of papers, in Sandy Disaster zones we have so much to distribute *it may be beneficial to plan ahead* with a small backpack or sidebag, all of our lit does not fit on clipboard alone.

BASIC LIT GUIDE: MEDICAL, LEGAL, HOUSING FLYERS. If it is too overwhelming, start with the basics, build from there. Separate lit with clips to stay organized.

Coordinator will designate or we will decide as a group what zone to canvass!
Transportation will be determined and you will dispatch to turf, keep track of where you are going so you can get back at end of day!

REMEMBER TO KEEP TRACK OF STREETS CANVASSED

So now you're at a door! How does that RAP thing go?

Who I am

Who we are

What we are doing

How has your experience been? <-*listen*->

Questions in form not yet answered

Would contact like to volunteer/ organize?

Followup - ACCOUNTABILITY

Resolution! (the tasty cake)

In a disaster zone, many people are overwhelmed with organizations offering x y and z aid, and some have seen little results,

people can be wary by now of door knocking organizations so always **have your patient and sympathetic foot forward!**

If you may be someone who isn't sure how to constructively sympathize, ask for a sensitivity training for yourself or your group! **Don't be embarrassed** cus unless we are having the same experience, we legitimately do not "understand" what folks are going through, sensitivity training helps everyone communicate in a less alienating way. Occupy Sandy Outreach Coordinators are happy to provide tips on communication.

**Each Rap varies, because it is an individual conversation, different every time!
(which is what makes canvassing so rewarding)**

Example of a rap:

Hi- I'm Jubilee from Occupy Sandy (the organization that has been A. sending out demo volunteers B. running X distribution site C. whatever qualifier if you feel need to state one, it is not necessary though)

I bet you've had a lot of different organizations knocking on your door since the storm offering assistance of one sort or another, here's how we are different from them- We are and we are working with members of the community that live here to help each other instead of waiting (on the government, FEMA, etc) / (for someone to save us)

How has your experience been since the storm?

(Active listening means participating by being supportive and asking questions to fill out the form, listening empathetically without interrupting. Sometimes we are the only people a contact may have spoken with or had a personal vent moment with in a week/ month/ etc. We're here to be neighbors, friends and resource-shares together)

Ask any other questions pertinent to filling out rest of form...if they are having landlord problems GET THE LANDLORD'S name and number!

Ask if they would be down with going to a community meeting, or organizing themselves! *Community leaders all start somewhere, this might be the day! Let them know about anything you know of going on now/ this week or upcoming actions. If they seem interested, check out what kinds of skills they might want to share with everyone.*

Make sure before leaving they have all relevant flyers to their own situation (HOUSING, LEGAL, MEDICAL) and if you have enough on hand LEAVE FLYERS with them on all topics, "Here, if these don't have information you need on them, pass them on to neighbors or friends who might"

Thank you so much

DURING RAP if there is a critical life threatening condition, or an inability to connect with resources ie: no phone/ homebound it is your responsibility to place phone calls to MEDICAL/ LEGAL/ CONSTRUCTION teams at time of visit.

Many contacts WILL have ongoing medical/ legal aid/ or construction-mold needs, YOU will have an active hand in **FOLLOWUP** which is all canvassers duty to be accountable to contacts for.

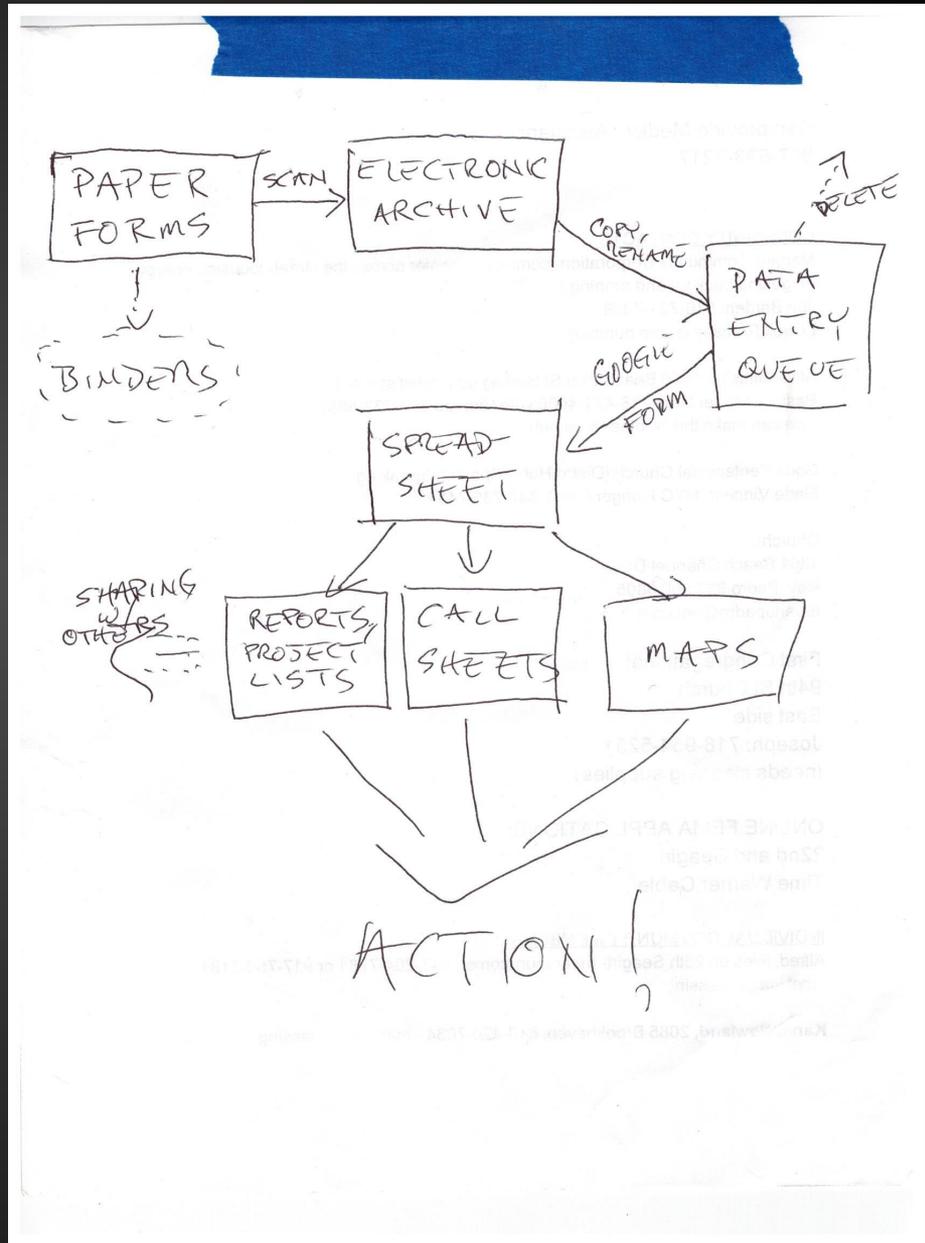
This is a time at an outreach office location (in Rockaway @Beach 38th St. Gertrudes or Cornaga Church in a House) where calls are placed to check on status of high risk medical situations, whether legal aid/ counseling has been sought successfully and whether access to requesting mold remediation and demo has taken place.

We have a master list of numbers to refer people to that is always evolving and growing for a multitude of needs (eviction/ utilities problems/ NYCHA/ domestic violence/ disaster assistance/ etc) **Please familiarize yourself with it**, and take an active role in seeking out new organizations providing free services that may be useful!

Updates to specific situations will be tracked and recorded either in paper system (binder) or (more reliably) in our spreadsheet database.

Now that we've gone over the data collection, lets discuss the data workflow!

This is a flowchart of what we do with canvassed forms, and how they are processed into problem resolution!



The paper forms filled out at doors get scanned and placed in our entry queue (**Data Entry Queue Semi Public**) in batches of 15-20ish, then our "data stewards" handle the tedious task of transcribing the handwritten from forms into the google form (<http://bit.ly/osrock-canvass-input>) which compiles our info into a master cool spreadsheet! From here we can make awesome data tools and collect useful numbers.

What is a Data Steward?

A Data Steward is a volunteer who helps gather, categorize, input, and map pertinent and sometimes critical global health information into websites, in order to assist in improving health conditions and to help save lives. This work can be done from any computer (most of us do the work at home or office, when ever we have time). A Data Steward needs to have advanced computer skills, or be a fast learner with basic computer skills. Most of all, a Data Steward should have a genuine desire to help people in distress from all walks of life regardless of their race, politics, religion, etc.

As Canvassers it is our responsibility to make sure we have a stable crew of data stewards, or become them ourselves to get our data input and accessible without creating a backed up lag in our system

Example of a master referral list

Any member of outreach conducting followup calls should have access to a solid list of organization providing FREE aid of varying genres. We are not here to advertise businesses but advocate community empowerment through joint efforts! Many orgs are doing this

MED HOUSING | CLEANUP | SOLID

LEGAL

20900 347 674 3621 MED HOTLINE | 718 724 8757 VISITING NURSES

347 461 4632 CLEANUP RESPONSE & REBUILD

800 621 3362 APPLY DISASTER ASSISTANCE

888 469 7365 DEPT OF LABOR & WORK

718 351 0829 extreme cases Priority houses Disaster relief work

1800 342 3009 NY temp cash assistance
1800 342 3009

718 577 1399 "One Shot" Emergency Grant

800 339 1759 Dept of Financ'l Services Disaster Hotline Homeowners/ Insurance

866 562 5227 SPEC TAX DEDUCTIONS - economic losses
IRS DISASTER HOTLINE

718 875 5062 DOMESTIC VIOLENCE HOTLINE

legal - 212 584 3365 NYLAG STORM HELP stormhelp@nylag.org

888 663 6880 LEGAL AID HELPLINE

347 592 2411 LEGAL SERVICES NY 10-3

718 565 8500 MAKE THE ROAD QUEENS 718 727 1222 STATEN ISLAND

212 766 4522 ext 150 PUBLIC BENEFITS & HOUSING ISSUES

~~212 766 4522~~ NY COUNTY LAWYERS ASSOC'S LEGAL COUNSELING PROJECT 212 267 6646 insurance claims & coverage issues

The Family Center - Public Benefits & Housing Issues

OSLEGAL for organizing legal clinic 416 335 6291

800 877 8339 - LOW INTEREST LOANS & SMALL BUSINESS ADMIN.

888 209 8124 DISASTER UNEMPLOYMENT ASSISTANCE DEADLINE 2 OUT OF NY → 877 358 5306 APPLY FEB 4, 2013

800 699 5636 NYS BAR HELPLINE

1800 342 3377 Utilities HOTLINE 7:30-7:30

877 647 5291 Urban Justice Re: utility turn off / eviction prevention
4, 3 = soc sec.

344
COW

Thank you!

The work you are doing is vital! Get rest, drink plenty of water, guard your clipboard with your life, and stay current.

DON'T AGONIZE ORGANIZE

