

Every two years, election officials train an army of more than 1.4 million volunteers to carry out a task critical to our democracy. On Election Day, the citizens' right to cast a vote rests not in the hands of election officials, but in the hands of poll workers.

Ultimately, poll workers ensure that eligible citizens can cast a vote and have that vote counted. Election officials must provide the training and tools poll workers need to carry out these important tasks. How well poll workers carry out their responsibilities reflects the quality of their training and the support they receive on Election Day.

The 2002 passage of the Help America Vote Act (HAVA), the deployment of new voting systems, and the introduction of new procedures and laws has required the reinvention of most training programs. In addition, the heightened scrutiny of elections nationwide has made that more difficult at times.

This manual presents a wide variety of training methods to address different needs. No matter what method — or combination of methods — you choose to keep trainees engaged, keep in mind the following suggestions:

Make time to develop your training program. Before developing a training curriculum, election officials need to evaluate post-election debriefing reports and error reports to determine their training needs. Deficiencies provide a focus for subsequent training.

Be realistic in deciding what to cover. Training experts advise focusing on three main subject areas. In practice, this may mean that introducing a new voting system will limit the other changes you can implement in that election cycle.

Build evaluations into your program. Finding ways to evaluate the effectiveness of training and tools prior to Election Day is critical. Only by testing the understanding of poll workers can you determine whether poll workers will be ready for Election Day.

Developing a high-quality training program takes time, work and patience. It may require several elections to determine the most effective methods and what works for your office. The reward for this extra effort? Poll workers who won't let you down on Election Day.



Training Programs That Work

In This Chapter:

- **Tips to Improve Poll Worker Training**
 - **Ideas For Planning a Training Program**
-

Tips to Improve Poll-Worker Training

Use Visual Aids. Create poster-sized signs to reinforce the most critical information and place them around the training room. Adult learning experts have found that trainees can retain information better when they are able to shift their gaze away from the front of the room.

Mirror Election Day in Training. Make sure that all the materials used in training – the opening checklist, the list of voters, the paperwork, the job guides – will be exactly the same on Election Day.

Use Job Aids. A job aid is a tool for reminding poll workers how to perform a specific role or task at the polling place. They should be short – no more than one page – and easy to read. You might, for example, have job aids for tasks such as checking the list of voters, assisting voters whose names are not on the list, or assisting voters with ballot machines.

Visit Other Jurisdictions. Visiting another jurisdiction's training session may give you new ideas. Also, as an observer, you may see problems or pitfalls that you didn't notice in your own training because you were too busy conducting the training.

Get Feedback from Poll Workers. Invite poll workers to provide feedback on the training program. Develop specific questions such as, "Did you feel confident in your ability to open the polls after training?" or "Did you encounter anything on Election Day that was not covered in training?" and "What can we do better?"

Ideas For Planning a Training Program

Review poll-worker performance in the last election. Were certain types of poll-worker errors common across the jurisdiction? Did you get feedback from the poll-workers about the training? If not, consider sending a survey to poll workers asking for feedback on training. Identify the top three problems experienced in the last election and use them to set the priorities for subsequent training.



Review the content of your current training sessions. It may be more effective to familiarize poll workers with the manual than to take up valuable time reviewing all of it in the training session. Make a list of topics that could be deleted or abbreviated.

Review the list of Election Day supplies. Are they all necessary, or have changes in procedures or voting systems made some of them obsolete? Are they easy to find on Election Day, or is there a better way to pack them so that nothing gets lost?

Review the training manual. Does it need to be revised to reflect changes in procedure or new equipment? Is the information clearly presented? Ask one of your newer poll workers to read the manual and identify the topics they found confusing.

Consider separate training for experienced and new poll workers. If you are not implementing major changes, it may be more effective to separate experienced and new poll workers. If you train all poll workers together, consider using more experienced poll workers to help train new poll workers.

Determine what poll workers could take home to review. The manual? A training video? A quiz or scenarios to work through? A copy of the PowerPoint presentation?

Consider a pay increase for attendance. If you are implementing new procedures or want to conduct a more intensive training class, improving poll worker pay may increase the number and quality of people who attend.

Determine the equipment and supplies needed. If you are introducing new voting equipment, you will need several voting machines so that poll workers can practice using them. If the format of materials such as the provisional ballot application, the voter list or the precinct map has changed, make sure the revised versions are available for training.

Choose qualified poll worker trainers. The best trainers often have high energy levels and dynamic personalities. Poll-worker trainers must also be able to dedicate time to managing and conducting training sessions.



Planning for Change

In This Chapter:

- **Managing Change at the Polling Place**
 - **Implementing a New Voting System**
 - **The “Practice Makes Perfect” Model**
-

Managing Change at the Polling Place

An election is a complex process, and a change in any aspect of election administration affects what the poll workers do on Election Day.

Smooth transition to new systems or procedures requires communication with elected officials, politicians, voters, poll workers, community organizations, the media, the elections staff, and voters.

Consider forming a steering committee made up of staff and poll workers to oversee the process. These poll workers can also serve as a focus group for testing changes in forms and procedures. Experienced poll workers can provide valuable input on what will and will not work in the polling place on Election Day. These poll workers can also serve as “change ambassadors,” helping to build critical support from other poll workers later in the process.

Forms, Supplies and Paperwork

- Conduct a thorough review of all forms that might be affected by the change. When drafting revisions of any forms, be sure to include all relevant staff in the revision process.
- Allow plenty of time to revise forms. In setting a deadline for getting forms printed, remember to count back from the start of training.
- Test the forms. Consider bringing in poll workers to test the usability of the forms. Have the poll workers fill out the forms and identify any problems that arise.
- Ideally, the forms will be self-explanatory. A form that is too complicated increases the likelihood of error. Poll workers are tired at the end of Election Day, and they may not have the patience to figure out calculations and complicated procedures.



In planning how to administer changes in polling place operations, identify the staff and stakeholders who will be affected, including:

- *Warehouse personnel*
- *Print shops*
- *Election supply vendors*
- *Trainers*
- *Party officials*
- *Officials responsible for nominating or appointing poll workers*
- *Polling place contacts, such as school and church administrators*
- *Recruiters*
- *Poll workers*

Poll Worker Training Manuals

The Poll Worker Training Manual is more than a handy too. It's a legal document that codifies Election Day polling place rules. Revising the manual takes a lot of time and careful attention.

Revising the poll-worker training manual goes hand-in-hand with revising the forms.

Training poll workers on new equipment and procedures requires revising the materials used. Review current training materials and identify those aspects of the process that will be changing, and those that will not. Training materials should highlight the most important aspects of any transition.

Poll Worker Assignments

Reduce potential problems on Election Day by pairing experienced poll workers with new poll workers

In making the transition to more sophisticated equipment, consider creating a poll-worker position dedicated to resolving technical problems at the polling place. In some jurisdictions, these "precinct technicians" are not considered official poll workers, and therefore are not subject to residency and age requirements.

Implementing a New Voting System

Implementing a new voting system is a huge undertaking, and there can be no mistakes. Poll workers responsible for rolling out computer voting systems typically have little or no technical expertise.

When launching a new system, everyone needs training: staff, media, candidates, campaign workers, elected officials, poll workers, and voters. A successful training program will enable everyone to understand the new systems, be confident in their ability to use them, and know how to obtain support on Election Day. In many instances, poll workers, must open the polls within one hour of arrival, and inadequate training results in high stress levels on Election Day morning.

Revamp and Test Training Materials

Draft the training materials – the election manual, the training guide, hands-on exercises, and the video script – while using an actual voting machine programmed for the election.



Write (and possibly illustrate) simple instructions for opening and closing the machines based on the vendor-provided instructions and your own experience with the practice machine. Use direct, easy-to-understand verbs such as “Open,” “Touch” and “Select.”

Test the accuracy and quality of the instructions by having staff work in teams of two, with one person reading the instructions and the other person doing the work. Time this activity to determine how long it will take on Election Day.

Observe poll workers in a practice session as they follow the instructions for using the new equipment. If poll workers have trouble, the instructions probably need to be revised.

Build poll workers’ confidence and familiarity with the set-up procedures by using the same supplies and checklists during training sessions that they will use on Election Day. Employ “hands-on” training methods.

Hands-on training classes with new equipment are critical. Make sure you have enough new systems available at training classes to allow each poll worker enough time to complete the desired function twice, and to observe others completing the function. Two to six poll workers per machine is optimal. With larger groups, some people will never touch the machine, or trainers will have to make an extra effort to ensure that all poll workers engage the machine.

Train people in pairs to reinforce the requirement of working in teams when opening and closing the voting machines on Election Day. Have them play both roles: one team member reads the instructions and documents the actions, while the other team member does the work.

Self-paced, hands-on practice between the training class and Election Day is valuable. In many jurisdictions, training sessions occur two to four weeks prior to Election Day,



Teams of poll workers set a up a voting machine by consulting their manual and job aids, Franklin County, Ohio, Spring 2006.

which is plenty of time to forget a lot of details. Practicing before election morning allows poll workers to make mistakes, correct them and build confidence.

Provide Election Day Support

No matter how effective, thorough, and professional the poll-worker training, providing a sufficient level of support on Election Day is key to making that day a success.

Troubleshooting Materials

Make sure each precinct has an easy-to-use guide that gives step-by-step instructions for solving the most common problems. Be sure the guide provides the call center phone number if the solution does not work. Include the troubleshooting guide in the manual, make sure the training class includes instructions on how to find and use this section of the manual.

Call Center Support

Set up a call center at the central election office and provide every precinct with the phone number. Put the phone number in several places, including the open/close instruction sheets, the election manual, the troubleshooting guides, the election supplies and on stickers on the equipment.

Staff the call center with technicians who have had specialized training. Have the technicians document each call, including the time the call was received, the precinct, the poll worker, a description of the problem, the machine serial number, the resolution, and when the call ended. Provide the call center staff with a more detailed support guide with instructions for solving problems that may arise. Be sure the machine vendor has a call center that will provide backup support for your call center staff. Be sure the call center staff knows what to do if they cannot resolve the problem, and include instructions on how to deploy a field technician.

Most calls will come in around the opening and closing of the polls, so schedule staff accordingly.

Field Technicians

Field technicians are the third tier of Election Day support for the poll workers. They often are specially trained election office staff or government employees from county and city information technology (IT) departments. Each is assigned

For major changes, such as voting equipment changes, create a multi-tiered support system that includes the following components:

- *Troubleshooting materials at the polling place*
- *A call center staffed by technicians who can talk poll workers through problems over the phone*
- *A staff of mobile technicians who can go to polling places to solve complex problems*



to help the precincts in a specific geographical area. Make sure all field technicians keep a log of their activities, including the polling places they visit and the support they provide. By reviewing this information and debriefing after each election, election staff can decide when the poll workers have reached a confidence level when the IT support staff are no longer needed on Election Day. This usually takes several elections.

During the first election, instruct field technicians to visit each polling place in their area before the polls open to answer questions. Throughout Election Day, have the field technicians circulate among the polling places, providing assistance as needed. Prior to the close of the polls, the field technicians should visit the locations again to ensure that the poll workers are prepared to close the voting machines.

Consider recruiting a supplemental support crew for the first election conducted on new equipment. Partner with county and city IT employees, and assign each to provide support to two or three polling places each. Ask each to be on stand-by at one of the assigned polling places in the morning and at another one in the evening, to provide additional support. Encourage the supplemental support crew to give assistance only when requested by the poll workers. The poll workers should strive to be successful on their own, but if they are unable to solve a problem with the new equipment, the IT support crew will be onsite to reinforce the correct procedures.

The “Practice Makes Perfect” Model

The “Practice Makes Perfect” model supplements hands-on training in jurisdictions that deploy new voting equipment on Election Day.

Poll-worker training sessions begin as many as six to eight weeks prior to Election Day. The “Practice Makes Perfect” model provides a refresher on opening, operating, and closing the new voting equipment in the week before Election Day.

Here’s how it works: invite poll workers to drop in to various locations throughout the jurisdiction during the week prior to Election Day. During the sessions, poll workers can open a voting machine, print the zero report, process a voter, cancel a ballot, run the end of day results tape, and close the voting machine. Poll workers can practice at their own pace. Staff the “Practice Makes Perfect” sites with experienced precinct chiefs to get the poll workers started, provide help when necessary, and check the results.



Purpose and Benefits

- Provides a non-threatening, low-pressure environment for poll workers to practice using the new equipment prior to Election Day.
- Reinforces the poll workers' confidence level and ability to manage the equipment, ensuring a smooth start-up on Election Day morning.
- Reduces the likelihood of poll worker errors on Election Day.

Resources Needed

- Reserve space, prepare materials and train staff in advance. The precinct chiefs should be adept at communicating and comfortable with giving instructions.
- Aside from the election office, ideal sites for “Practice Makes Perfect” are other government buildings such as civic centers, libraries and city halls. County and city offices can make a substantial contribution by donating the use of their space.
- Assemble adequate supplies, ensure that the voting machines are ready for use during the “Practice Makes Perfect” period, and arrange for transportation of the machines to the sites.

Adaptations

Depending upon the size of your jurisdiction, you may need one or many “Practice Makes Perfect” locations. If your jurisdiction is large, make sure locations are geographically dispersed to increase the likelihood that poll workers will stop by and practice on their own.

Evaluation

- By tracking the visits to the “Practice Makes Perfect” locations, election officials can determine how many poll workers at each polling place attended a practice session. Ideally, at least one poll worker from each polling place should visit a “Practice Makes Perfect” location.
- Even though poll-worker attendance at the “Practice Makes Perfect” location is voluntary, the desire to do a good job on Election Day provides the necessary incentive to participate.
- Provide the opportunity for poll workers to give feedback at each of the “Practice Makes Perfect” sites.



Section 5: Sample #34: Flyer inviting poll workers to attend PMP the priorities for subsequent training.

Training Tools

In This Chapter:

- Hands-On Training
 - The Perfect Polling Place
 - Role Playing
 - Peer-to-Peer Techniques
 - Job Aids
 - PowerPoint or Slide Presentations
 - Videos
 - Online Training
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Hands-On Training

This chapter illustrates several training techniques and tools that have been proven to improve adult learners' comprehension and retention of information. Use them to improve poll worker performance on Election Day.

Hands-on training is critical when teaching people how to perform any kind of mechanical procedure. Poll workers need to see how a power cord attaches to a machine; they need to practice pulling out the legs of a voting booth; they need to feel how a machine component snaps into place; they need to run through all the instruction screens on a voting system; they need to practice replacing a roll of paper.

Hands-on training should include an introduction to the equipment that provides a brief orientation to the equipment and a discussion of its advantages.

Poll workers need guidance during hands-on training. There are various methods for providing that guidance. In a centralized model, a single trainer directs small teams of no more than five poll workers as they practice each part of the process. With this model, the trainer will need a support staff to provide more detailed guidance and answer questions. Using a less centralized model, a trainer is assigned to each poll worker team to provide instruction and supervise the practice. With either model, it is critical that the poll workers, not the trainers, work with the machines.

The training should replicate the Election Day process exactly. For example, if poll workers are being trained to operate a new voting system, the training should include machine set-up, printing of the opening and closing tapes, and completion of all necessary opening, mid-day, and closing forms.



Hands-On Training

Hands-on training is particularly effective for teaching poll workers how to:

- *set up equipment.*
- *open and close voting machines.*
- *prepare voting machines for voting.*
- *print out zero tapes and results tapes.*
- *scan ballots.*
- *remove memory cartridges.*
- *use an electronic poll book.*

The hands-on training should allow time for poll workers to make mistakes, and figure out for themselves how to correct or avoid them.

Hands-on training should also include a variety of scenarios that poll workers are likely to encounter on Election Day, such as voters who leave before casting their votes, and power failures.

Benefits of Hands-on Training

- Allows poll workers an opportunity to handle all of the supplies and checklists necessary to open the voting machines on Election Day.
- Supplements and reinforces the oral training and written Election manual.
- Builds poll worker confidence, which may reduce the pre-Election Day drop-out rate.

Resources Needed

- Hands-on training for new voting systems requires making a sufficient number of voting machines available in demonstration mode, so that teams of two or three can work with a machine. The machines should be programmed so that poll workers practice using the ballots that will be used on Election Day.
- Hands-on training for new voting systems also requires a space large enough to accommodate all the teams and their machines.
- All supplies and checklists that will be used on Election Day must be incorporated into the hands-on training. For example, if poll workers are required to break seals on Election Day, they should break seals during the hands-on training.



Trainer and poll worker run through a HAVA “over vote” scenario at the D.C. Board of Elections & Ethics, September 2006.

Pitfalls and Challenges

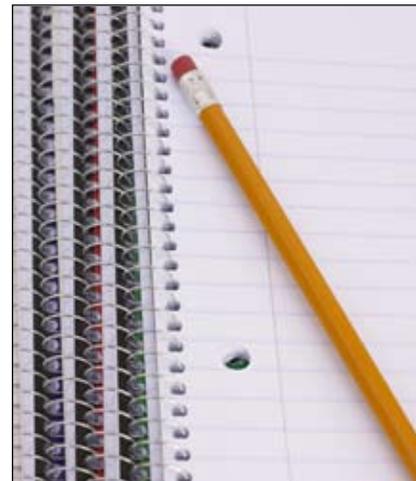
- Space in the training rooms may be a problem. Consider conducting the hands-on training in the warehouse where the equipment is located, or arrange to use larger training rooms outside your facility.
- Adequate staffing is vital to the success of hands-on training. The ratio of poll workers to trainers should be no larger than 6:1. Consider using technicians or experienced poll workers as trainers.
- Hands-on training may take longer than traditional training methods. Some jurisdictions provide an added monetary bonus or incentive to attend a longer or second training session.
- Some jurisdictions may have an insufficient supply of “extra” voting equipment for hands-on training.

Models for Varying Class Sizes:

- **Jurisdictions with small classes.** In this model, conduct the hands-on segment of the training class at a voting unit station. The station should consist of a sufficient number of machines as well as all the relevant forms and materials to allow poll workers to practice all the tasks required on Election Day. Staff the stations with trainers who can provide guidance and answer any questions.
- **Jurisdictions with large classes**
 - Jurisdictions with large classes may limit the number of poll workers at each class session and offer multiple sessions. This reduces class size and allows more poll workers the opportunity to practice with the voting equipment.
 - If large class size makes it impossible for poll workers to spend some “hands-on” time with the voting equipment during regular training sessions, the “Practice Makes Perfect” model enables poll workers to drop in at their convenience to practice their Election Day voting machine duties.

Evaluation

- Establish a method for poll workers to note problems they experience on Election Day. Monitor the calls coming in on Election Day from precincts.



- If you already require poll workers to note problems on Election Day, compare the list of problems prior to implementing station training with the problems encountered after training.



Trainer at the St. Louis County Board of Elections employs a demonstration-sized version of an actual voter roster page, August 2006

The “Perfect Polling Place” Technique

Opening a polling place on Election Day is comparable to setting up an office, orienting new employees and welcoming customers within one hour. The “Perfect Polling Place” technique facilitates the process by giving poll workers the chance to familiarize themselves with the layout and operation of a polling place ahead of time.

The concept of the “Perfect Polling Place” technique is simple: create a polling place prototype, much like a model show room. It is much easier for poll workers to understand what needs to be done on Election Day when they can see, touch and walk through an actual polling place as a part of their training session.

(Insert #35: Photo of PPP from Johnson Co, MO digital photo)

All of the elements of the prototype should look exactly like an Election Day polling place, including outdoor signs, interior signs, instructions, sample ballots, check-in supplies, forms, and the voting equipment.

By watching experienced poll workers operate in the the “Perfect Polling Place” technique, training staff can gain valuable insight into what procedures need to be improved.

The “Perfect Polling Place” technique helps poll workers learn how to:

- *set up a polling place.*
- *post signage.*
- *check supplies.*
- *arrange voting machines.*
- *promote efficient processing and “flow” of voters.*



Benefits

- Provides an opportunity for poll workers to review placement of supplies and signs, and practice how they will process voters on Election Day.
- Reinforces content of the training with a demonstration.
- Reduces anxiety for new poll workers by familiarizing them with the polling place in a calm, safe environment.

Resources Needed

- Samples of all the materials used at each polling place must be ready for demonstration at the training session. If multiple trainings are conducted simultaneously, you will need multiple copies of sample materials.
- Space for a mock polling place at the training location.

Pitfalls and Challenges

- It is best to have space comparable to an actual polling place, but you can create an adequate substitute with free wall space and a few tables and chairs.

Adaptations

- For off-site training sessions, setting up a “Perfect Polling Place” reminds staff members at what poll workers experience on Election Day. Consider assigning this task to tenured poll workers serving as assistants to the training staff.
- Use poll workers and staff members to “perform” various roles on the “Perfect Polling Place” “stage.”

Role Playing

Role-playing helps poll workers learn how to:

- Check in voters.
- Ask for identification.
- Process provisional voters.
- Handle special situations such as angry voters, lost voters or challenges.



- Assist voters with voting machines.
- Assist voters with disabilities.
- Prevent electioneering.
- Handle Election Day observers or poll watchers.

Role-playing teaches poll workers not only about administrative procedures, but also about appropriate interaction with voters. Develop a variety of likely scenarios and create a “Perfect Polling Place” as a stage for the role-play. As with all training, the materials and set-up for role-playing should mirror what the poll workers will encounter on Election Day. If you will be using job aids or a reminder sheet, those materials should be available.

Demonstrate as many scenarios as possible in order to provide poll workers with solutions for problems that occur on Election Day.

Benefits

- Provides a real-life Election Day experience.
- Creates a comfortable environment for poll workers to share problems they have encountered on Election Day and discuss additional problem-solving techniques.
- Reduces anxiety for new poll workers.



Trainers play the roles of poll worker and voter, DC Board of Elections and Ethics, November 2006

Resources Needed

- Develop the scenarios ahead of time – they need not be longer than a paragraph.

- Equipment and materials to simulate the polling place on Election Day.

Pitfalls and Challenges

- The training location needs sufficient space to set up a mock polling place.

Evaluation

- The role-playing should occur toward the end of the training session and reinforce the material covered. Listen to questions that arise during the exercises to evaluate the other components of the training program.

Sample Role-playing Exercises

Exercise: “Using the Street Guide”

(Handouts for exercise: [Sample Street Guide.](#))

- 1) Look up 4809 Hampsted Court. Is it even or odd? Odd. How many voters are on the farthest list of numbers to the right? 2
- 2) Look up 7308 Hampsted Square. Don't you need to know whether it's Hampsted Square East, North or South? Hampsted Square South. How many voters? 20
- 3) Look up 8217 Griswold Drive. How many voters? 12

Exercise: “Processing Voters”

Handouts for exercise: [Sample Page from Poll Book Michelle Adams should be marked 17 years old; Barbara Andreas should be marked “AB”](#)); [Sample Page with all versions of the Voter Authority Slips; Provisional Ballot Application.](#)

- 1) I am Jim Ackerman. I live at 933 Sunview Road. Let's find me. Am I a perfect voter? Yes. Ask me, “What ballot do I want?” I say, “Republican.” What do we do? Write Jim's ballot style on a Republican Authority to Vote Slip. Note this Authority to Vote slip number in the Poll Book and send him off to the Voting Judge.
- 2) I am Michelle Adams-Young. I live at 807 Sunview Road. (Please find me on the Poll Book. Do you see me?) “Oh, yes, my mom got re-married and so I've changed my name. Is that a problem?”



- Name Change: What do I have to do to let the election office about my new name? Fill out a new voter registration form in the Precinct Workbook.
- What do you notice about my voter information in the Poll Book? I am 17. Am I still a perfect voter if I'm only 17? Yes. I can vote on candidates in a Primary, but not on measures.
- The Check-in Judge asks me, "What ballot do you want?" Let's say I say, "Democrat." Which Voter Authority Slip is the poll worker going to pull? The "Democrat" one. (Remember, they'll be different colors for the actual election.)
- What is the poll worker going to note in the Poll Book? The number on my Authority to Vote Slip which is: 1005.
- What is the Check-in Judge going to write on my Voter Authority Slip?
 - 1) Ballot style: It's 12.
 - 2) Write a check-mark next to the 17-year-old box on the Voter Authority Slip.
 - 3) My name is Barbara Andreas. I live at 936 Pleasant Drive. So far I'm a perfect voter. What do you notice about the box where you'd normally put my ballot style? It says "AB" – what does that mean?

Am I a perfect voter? No.

Do I get to vote? Yes, I will cast a provisional ballot. That means the Election Office will hold it until they find out what happened to my absentee ballot.

Let's look at the provisional application. Please write in my ballot style at the top right corner of the form. What is the most important thing we have to ensure that the provisional voter does? (Sign the application or else their ballot won't be counted!)



Trainer enacts a scenario with a first-time Check-in Clerk, DC Board of Elections and Ethics, November 2006

SCENARIOS TO ENACT THROUGH ROLE-PLAYING

Perfect voter – checks in – all information is correct in the poll book – voter signs – receives correct ballot or voter card – votes – deposits ballot or returns voter card – receives “I Voted” sticker – exits polling place.

Name or address change – checks in – poll worker learns of address change – directs voter to street index clerk to look up address – voter receives provisional ballot – signs the roster – completes paperwork – receives ballot or voter card – votes – deposits ballot or returns voter card – receives information on how to determine if the ballot was counted – receives “I Voted” sticker – exits polling place.

Voter missing ID – checks in – all information is correct in the poll book, but the voter must show ID – voter does not have ID – voter receives provisional ballot – signs the roster – completes paperwork – receives ballot or voter card – votes – deposits ballot or returns voter card – receives information on how to determine if the ballot was counted – receives “I Voted” sticker – exits polling place.

Lost voter – voter arrives and checks in – name is not in the poll book – voter directed to street index clerk to look up address – voter is in the wrong polling place – clerk looks up correct polling place information and directs voter to correct polling place.

Early voter – checks in – voter wants to turn in the EARLY BALLOT and vote on voting machine – voter receives provisional ballot – signs the roster – completes paperwork – receives ballot or voter card – votes – deposits ballot or returns voter card – receives information on how to determine if the ballot was counted – receives “I Voted” sticker – exits polling place.

Perfect voter – Needs assistance – checks in – all information is correct in the poll book – voter signs – receives correct ballot or voter card – voter begins to vote; however, asks for assistance – 2 poll workers must assist the voter – voter cast ballot – deposits ballot and/or returns voter card – receives “I Voted sticker” – exits polling place.

Perfect voter – Campaign shirt – checks in – voter is wearing campaign information – poll worker asks voter to remove or cover campaign button/shirt, etc. – voter signs – receives correct ballot or voter card – votes – deposits ballot or returns voter card – receives “I Voted” sticker – exits polling place.

Late voter – voter arrives or is in line after polls close at 7:00 p.m.



“Peer-to-Peer” Techniques

Experienced poll workers are a wealth of information, so make good use of them to help train their colleagues. By putting poll workers in the position of trainers, you also send an important message that you value their experience and knowledge.

Implement peer-to-peer techniques by grouping experienced and inexperienced poll workers together for role-playing and hands-on exercises, or by recruiting experienced poll workers as training assistants.

Working in teams of two or in small groups, experienced and inexperienced poll workers can pool their knowledge. To incorporate experienced poll workers into the instruction more explicitly, ask them to tell stories about how they handled situations like machine malfunctions, voter challenges, or missing ballots. Work with them in advance so you know what story they will tell and how you will make use of it. You may be able to prepare experienced poll workers to field questions from the floor on a particular topic. If you do this more than once during a training session, focus each time on a different topic and a different poll worker.

Pitfalls and Challenges

- **Peer-to-peer instruction** needs to be carefully structured. Don't say, “Talk among yourselves,” and expect that participants will get the information they need. Provide specific instructions, guidance and learning objectives for each activity.

Adaptations

Here are a few examples of how to use peer-to-peer training to familiarize trainees with the Poll Worker Manual:

- **Think-Pair-Share:** This one-on-one strategy requires course participants to use a designated portion of the Election Manual to solve a case study. One trainee devises a solution and shares it with a partner, who then evaluates it based on established criteria. They then reverse roles for a subsequent case study.
- **Small Groups:** Divide the participants into groups of six to 10. Each group member gives the rest of the group a three-minute overview of a particular chapter of the Election Manual.
- **Group-to-Group:** Each group gives an overview of an Election Manual chapter to the other groups.

Benefits

Peer-to-peer techniques allow poll workers to:

- *learn from each other's experience.*
- *practice working together as a team.*

Resources Needed

- *Divide participants up into small groups and plan activities focused on specific topics of instruction.*
- *For small group training, adequate space will be needed.*
- *Allot time to divide participants into groups and have them get to know each other before beginning the activities.*
- *If you are enlisting experienced poll workers, you will need time to work with them in advance of the training.*

Evaluation

- Administer a quiz on the training topics, including those presented through peer-to-peer methods. If most people correctly answer the questions associated with the peer-to-peer methods, assume the techniques are effective.



A poll worker with mobility and sight impairment leads discussions of sensitivity issues during training classes at the DC Board of Elections and Ethics.

Job Aids

On Election Day, poll workers find themselves in a fast-paced environment, often struggling to remember important information they learned weeks earlier in their training sessions.

Job aids provide a quick visual reminder of important steps and procedures. They come in various shapes and sizes – from a full-page laminated “cheat sheet” to a sticker on the outside of a voting machine or a reminder attached to the zipper pull of a supply suitcase.

Strategically-placed job aids provide reassurance and save poll workers the time and stress of looking through the training manual on Election Day.

Section 5: Sample Job Aid A: A laminated card attached to the zipper pull of the supply suitcase reminds poll workers what to pack in the suitcase and return to the office on Election Night. Sample Job Aid B: A laminated job guide located near the check-in table provides a quick reference for determining voter eligibility.

PowerPoint or Slide Presentations

A picture is worth a thousand words – especially when teaching people about complicated procedures and machinery. PowerPoint or some other type of on-screen presentation can add this crucial visual component to poll worker training and ensure consistency across training sessions and trainers.

Consider using the following graphics to illustrate important topics:

- layout of the polling place
- sample pages from the list of voters
- a flowchart showing the sequence of processing regular voters, voters who have moved, provisional voters and lost voters
- sample forms
- sample pages from the road guide
- sample precinct map
- timeline of Election Day activities

Resources needed

- PowerPoint software
- Laptop computer or portable memory
- Digital projector
- Electronic versions of all graphics

Pitfalls and Challenges

- Creating an effective PowerPoint presentation requires careful planning.
- Technological glitches with the file, the laptop or the digital projector can sabotage the presentation.
- Transferring photographs and other images to an electronic format can be a time-consuming.

Tips for Successful Implementation

- *Reduce the risk of technological glitches*
- *Practice giving the presentation using the file, computer, and digital projector that will be used for the presentation.*
- *Allow plenty of time to set up the computer and projector before the presentation.*
- *Match the projector's resolution to your laptop's resolution. Do not assume your presentation will work on another person's computer.*



Videos

Videos can also dramatize interpersonal aspects of working at the polls, such as assisting voters with disabilities. Once they've been produced, training videos are less expensive than poll worker manuals. They minimize inconsistencies in classroom training and ensure that all poll workers receive the same information.

- Videos emphasize particular topics. For instance, the North Carolina Secretary of State produced “The Right to Vote: Accessible Options” to provide sensitivity training and teach poll workers how to assist disabled voters. (<http://www.nd.gov/sos/electvote/voting/videos.html>)

Resources Needed

- Time to develop or write the script.
- Professionally produced videos typically require a significant outlay of money. Factors that drive up costs include:
 - using professional actors
 - renting locations for shooting

Pitfalls and Challenges

- Videos are difficult to update and can become obsolete quickly.
- Videos may be expensive to produce.
- Procurement of a production company and production itself take a long time.

Adaptations

- Enlist actual poll workers as actors.
- Partner with a local television personality, such as a news reporter or anchor, to serve as the narrator.
- Partner with a media communications class at a local college or university to produce the video (allow more time than with a professional production company).
- Consider pooling resources with other jurisdictions which have the same training needs.

Tips for Successful Implementation

- *Anticipate how the video will be used: for private viewings, face-to-face training sessions or broadcast on local public-access cable stations.*
- *Only include procedures that are unlikely to change. A training video must be used for multiple election cycles to be cost-effective.*
- *Rehearse the script before production.*
- *Circulate the script among people who don't know anything about elections to ensure the script is easy to understand.*
- *Double- and triple-check the accuracy of the script.*
- *Cover only the essential points, not every detail.*

Training Techniques

- Repeat each essential point at least three times in the video.
- Make the video more interactive by posing questions and reserving time to think about them, or to pause for discussion.
- Include interviews with experts.
- Include interviews with poll workers to increase their familiarity with the information.

Dissemination

- Make copies available for poll workers in both VHS and DVD format.
- Make the video available on your website.
- Partner with a local cable station to show the video. Notify all poll workers when it will air.
- Make copies available at local libraries.

Evaluation

If you are giving copies of the video to poll workers to watch at home, give them a post-video quiz on its content.

Online Training

Online training, which supplements face-to-face training, is conducted through a website that is developed in-house or with a contractor. Several jurisdictions put their training manuals online in a format that allows easy searching. A few jurisdictions are experimenting with customized online training.

Online courses typically include techniques to maintain interest in the material, such as video clips, animation, problem-solving scenarios, pop quizzes and a final test. Online training can evaluate poll workers' comprehension by reporting which poll workers have started, stopped or successfully completed the course, and which test questions were missed most frequently.

Optimally, online training supplements, but does not replace, face-to-face training.



Benefits

Online training offers many advantages to the election administrator:

- Everyone receives the same material.
- Content can be updated easily and disseminated immediately.
- The program can track individual and aggregate participation and generate result reports.
- Poll workers who register online can receive emails and surveys.
- Content can be tailored for particular poll-worker positions.
- The number of simultaneous users is unlimited.
For the poll worker, online training also has several benefits.
- Training is available at any time from any computer with internet access.
- Online training is a powerful preview and review of face-to-face training.
- Poll workers can spend as much time as they like on a topic.
- Poll workers can receive immediate feedback after completing online problem-solving scenarios or quizzes.

Resources Needed

- An initial investment to develop the site, either in-house or with a contractor
- If working with a contractor, annual fees for hosting and upgrading the site

Pitfalls and Challenges

- Online training materials must be written for online use, not simply posted to a website.
- Many poll workers may not have access to a computer or feel comfortable using one.

Tips for Successful Implementation

- *Launch your online training program with an outreach campaign that brings poll workers to the website.*
 - *Build in enough time — a minimum of 12 weeks — to develop and thoroughly test the online training program before rolling it out for use by all poll workers.*
 - *If outsourcing, contract with a reputable firm that has experience with online training and dependable technology.*
 - *If financial resources are limited, determine whether your jurisdiction can develop and support an online program “in-house.” If not, try partnering with a local college or university technology institute, especially one that has access to adult or continuing education specialists.*
-

Adaptations

- Online training may be modified to offer courses in multiple languages, or tailored to accommodate those with disabilities.

Evaluation

- Automatically-tallied test results provide information about the effectiveness of the course.

Models

Model: Texas Online Poll-worker Training Program: <http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/onlinepollworker.shtml>

Online Poll-Worker Training is here!

Election Officials and Poll Workers (Election Judges and Clerks):

The Texas Online Poll Worker Training is here! Texas is the first state in the nation to introduce Online Poll-Worker Training on a statewide basis! County Clerks and Elections Administrators simply log onto the system, begin entering email addresses of your Election Judges and Clerks for the upcoming November 7th General Election, select from a drop down menu to send them email, and you can even print reports for your records!

What are the Benefits?

This is a brand-new way to train Election Judges and Clerks all over the State—it's easy, convenient, and most of all, free! Providing online poll-worker training will allow you to:

- Conduct large training easily—just think, no room arrangements, seating problems, parking problems—your users can take the training course in the comfort of their homes if they like.
- Provide training at the Judges' and Clerks' convenience.
- Provide Training 24 hours a day/ 7 days a week.
- Gather response data from your Judges and Clerks by printing out a report that will tell you exactly what topic(s)



you need to go over in face-to-face training when they come to pick up their election supplies.

- Cut down on time and travel to face-to-face training.
- Reward your election judges and clerks by providing them with a Certificate of Achievement.

We at the Secretary of State's office are excited to bring you this new method of training, and look forward to working with you and your Judges and Clerks.

Poll Workers: if you haven't been contacted by your County Clerk or Elections Administrator about this new training, give them a call and ask them to get you signed up!

County Clerks/Elections Administrators: if you haven't offered this to your poll workers, sign them up! There's even a built-in help "desk" in our online training (upper right-hand corner of the screen), as well as a FAQ.

For technical support issues, please feel free to call our special toll-free number at 888.826.4858, or email us with your questions and comments.

Questions: Call or email Kim (Sutton) Kizer at 800.252.VOTE(8683). Thank you and Happy Web Learning!

Model: Hillsborough County Online Poll Worker Training Program:
<http://hillsborough-fl.training.clarityelections.com>

Welcome to our Online Training Center

Thank you for joining our Election Team and for your commitment to serve your community during election time. We are proud to have you on board, and are pleased to provide you this state-of-the-art online training program to teach you all of the essentials required to open, run and manage your precinct's polling place during election time.

If you are a new user, please refer to your welcome letter for the **user name** and **password** required to access the Online Training Center to begin your training. To help you get started, please click Quick Start Guide for detailed help on using the Online Training. Please click System Requirements to learn how to best view this online training material within the platform.

To begin the Online Training:

1. Type your **User Name** in the **Name** field.
2. Type your **Password** in the **Password** field.
3. Click **Login** to load your personal training page.
4. From there, just click the **Introduction** link, located in the **Current Courses** section to begin the training.

I am eager to hear how you like the online election worker training. Please feel free to email or call my office with your feedback.

See you at the polls!



*Login Questions?
Show Me*

*Buddy Johnson
Hillsborough
County Supervisor of Elections*

Plans and Checklists

In This Chapter:

- **Training Agendas**
- **Tips for Developing a Training Manual/Workbook**
- **Sensitivity Training**
- **Customized Training**
- **Outsourcing Your Training**

Training Agendas

The last chapter offered an array of training techniques. Once you have reviewed these options, the training agenda serves as a blueprint for how all the components fit together. There is no single, “correct” poll-worker training program; accordingly, this guidebook offers several models.

Tips for developing your training agenda:

- Determine the priority topics to be covered in the training session. Priority topics may be determined by changes in procedures and equipment or by problems encountered during the last election.
- Review your current training program. Did you cover information that most poll workers already knew, or could just as easily have learned from reading the manual? If so, consider dropping this material from the in-person training session.
- Draft an outline of the priority topics and identify an appropriate training method for each. Be sure to focus the in-person training sessions on the most important information.

Tips for Developing a Training Manual

When developing an election manual, think about the needs, abilities and constraints of those who will use it. For example, if most of the users are elderly, increasing the font size can make a big difference.

This is 14 point font. This is 12 point font.
This is 10 point font.

Using small typeface will reduce the number of pages, but it may be counterproductive if it is too difficult to read.

SAMPLE IN-HOUSE TRAINING AGENDA

Training Methods Used: Hands-on Training and In-Class Exercises

12:30 *Have refreshments ready. Collect signed poll-worker materials (sign-in sheets, loyalty oaths, etc.).*

1:00 *Opening – welcome workers, reiterate their role in democracy.*

1:15 *Review successes and problems encountered during the last election cycle.*

1:30 *Review law changes and any special issues for this election.*

Breakout sessions:

Station 1 – forms and provisional ballots;

Station 2 – supplies and special issues;

Station 3 – equipment operation

2:00 *First session – follow signs (signs show which precincts begin at which station – then they go clockwise)*

2:35 *Dismiss for refreshments.*

2:45 *Groups rotate to next station; next session begins.*

3:20 *Dismiss for refreshments.*

3:30 *Groups rotate to next station; next session begins.*

4:10 *Supervising judges pick up supplies in Clerk’s office.*

*Remind lead poll workers to check with their polling sites to make sure it will be open at **6:30 a.m.** on **Tuesday**. They have the contact information in their notebook.*

Section 5: Sample #37: Cover Page to St. Louis County, MO Training Manual

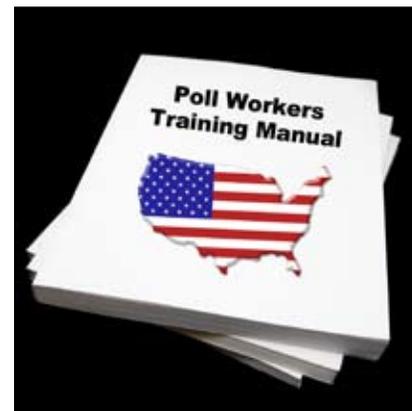
Design Considerations

When designing your manual, follow these simple tips from Design for Democracy, a group of design professionals who have established standards for election materials:

- Consult users about how they want to use the manual. If possible, watch them use it to learn what works and what needs to be changed.
- Reduce clutter and make the manual easy to read by leaving plenty of white space on each page.
- Use a font style and size that is easy for the users to read, such as Arial (the font you're reading now) or Franklin Gothic Book.
- To make information easy to find, use chapter titles, headings, and sub-headings to break up the text and label chunks of information.
- To make information easy to absorb, use numbering and bullets rather than large blocks of text.
- To promote greater use of the manual, use active voice and strong verbs.
- Incorporate illustrations for information that is complex (e.g., how to set up a machine). Use flowcharts to explain processes and decision-making scenarios.
- Include "What If" sections to direct poll workers through specific problem scenarios.
- Organize the manual:
 - Chronologically – in the order the information will be needed on Election Day.
 - or-
 - According to specific task scenarios like processing a provisional voter.
- Create a comprehensive index and consider putting it in the front of the manual, if that is how most people will access the information.

Important Information

To emphasize important information, such as law changes or new practices, use "call-out boxes" like this one alongside the text. Exaggerate the boxes – color, weighted fonts – to attract the reader's attention.



- Bind the manual so that it opens flat. Options include wire or plastic spiral binding, a three-ring binder or a single ring in the upper left corner with laminated card-stock pages for covers.
- Create companion training pieces so that the manual is not your only tool for communicating information to the poll workers. In the training session, explain what the manual contains and how to use it by creating role-play scenarios that require poll workers to find information in the manual.
- Don't expect anyone, except the editor, to read the entire manual.
- Stick to one font and distinguish chapters, section headings and subheadings with various sizes and weights – bold, italic – of the same font.
- Get professional help if you can, particularly from:
 - A designer
 - An editor
 - A usability consultant

Diagrams, Photos and Graphics

Design for Democracy also offers the following suggestions for maximizing the effectiveness of illustrated diagrams, photographs and graphic design elements:

- To explain voting processes, illustrated diagrams are more effective than photographs because they are clearer and less intimidating.
- Simple line-drawing illustrations can emphasize critical components and delete extraneous material.
- Scale, color or shading can exaggerate important elements.
- Arrows and lines should depict actions and processes.
- Illustrations are better when you do not want to draw attention to gender, age or nationality; a photograph is inevitably a photograph of someone.
- For materials that promote participation or build a sense of voting community, photographs of people having positive voting experiences are appropriate.



- Combine photographs with simple graphic design elements (e.g. stars and stripes) to create a more celebratory image.
- The ability to resize graphic design elements makes them more appropriate than photographs for large applications such as banners. The image quality of photographs often suffers when they are enlarged.
- Digital illustrations and graphic design elements are easy to work with, modify, and store. Develop a library of illustrations that can be reused to increase consistency and decrease costs.
- Photographs are best to show certain details of a machine or document.

Developing a Training Workbook

While manuals are good references, they do not make the best hands-on training tools. Consider creating a separate training workbook consisting of in-class exercises, quizzes, simulations, and all necessary sample forms.

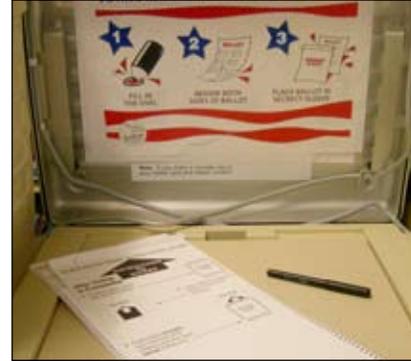
At the end of the training session, ask the poll workers to write their names on their completed workbooks and leave them with the class instructor. Review the completed workbooks for accuracy, handwriting legibility and other placement-relevant information that will help ensure that each polling place has a staff with an optimal blend of skills.

The completed workbooks can also indicate the effectiveness of the training session. For example, if most trainees complete a particular form incorrectly, this probably means that the trainer did not explain the procedure sufficiently.

Sensitivity Training

Imagine that every time you've voted, someone has looked over your shoulder, reading the ballot to you and marking it for you. Until 2006, if you were a voter with visual impairments, this was how it was done. The Help America Vote Act of 2002 (HAVA) now requires that every polling place have at least one piece of voting equipment on which voters with special needs can vote privately and independently.

In conformance with the Voting Accessibility for the Elderly and Handicapped Act (1984) and the Americans with Disabilities Act, election officials expend considerable energy and resources selecting voting systems that are accessible to all voters. This effort is wasted, however, if poll workers are not trained to use the equipment, fail to ensure that the polling place is accessible, or are insensitive to voters' needs.



Election officials have found that poll workers are responsive to sensitivity training, and appreciate the tips offered to ensure that all voters have a positive voting experience. Some jurisdictions invite representatives from organizations such as community living centers to make presentations on assisting voters with special needs.

SAMPLE PAGE FOR POLL WORKER MANUAL

Voters with Disabilities

All voters, including voters with disabilities, have the right to vote independently and in secret. It is the poll worker's job to work with voters who have disabilities to find the most suitable method to check their registration, educate them on his or her choices, issue them a ballot and direct them to the appropriate voting equipment.

Treat voters with disabilities with the same courtesy you would any other voter. Below are some etiquette reminders:

- Be courteous and respectful.
- Common sense will provide an answer to most questions.
- Be considerate of extra time it may take for a person who is disabled or elderly to get things done, and give unhurried attention to a person who has difficulty speaking.
- Always speak directly to the voter, and not to a companion, aide or sign language interpreter.
- Ask before you help. The person may not want any assistance. Don't insist – take “no” for an answer.
- On the other hand, don't be shy about offering assistance. Your courtesy will be appreciated.
- If the polling place is in a building with several routes through it, be sure that there are sufficient signs to direct a person to the most accessible way around the facility.

Voters Who Have Speech or Hearing Impairments

- A voter who cannot speak can give name and address by simply providing identification to the assisting poll worker. The poll worker then reads the name and address out loud.
- Follow the voter's cues to determine whether speaking, gestures or writing is the most effective method of communication.



- If speaking, speak calmly, slowly and directly to the voter. Do not shout. Your facial expressions, gestures, and body movements help in understanding. Face the voter at all times and keep your face in full light (not backlit).
- Rephrase, rather than repeat, sentences that the voter does not understand.

Voters Who Are Blind or Visually Impaired

- A voter who is blind may choose to use an assistant.
- Identify yourself and state that you are a poll worker as soon as you come in contact with the voter.
- If guiding a voter who is blind, offer your arm to the voter, rather than taking the voter's arm.
- If a person has a guide dog, walk on the opposite side of the voter from the dog. Do not pet or otherwise distract a guide dog without permission from the owner. Note: "guide dogs" may be any breed or size. If you are unsure, simply ask, "Is this a service animal?"
- When giving verbal directions to help the voter navigate the polling place, be as specific as possible, and identify obstacles in the path of travel.
- If you are going to leave a person who is blind, let the person know.

Voters with Mobility Impairments

- Do not push or touch another person's wheelchair without their prior consent. People using adaptive equipment often consider the equipment as part of their personal space.
- Ask before helping. Grabbing someone's elbow may throw the person off balance. A person with mobility impairments might lean on a door while opening it. Quickly opening the door may cause the person to fall.
- Fasten mats and throw-rugs securely or move them out of the way. A mobility impaired person could trip over them.
- Keep floors as dry as possible on rainy or snowy days.
- Keep the ramps and wheelchair-accessible doors to the polling place unlocked and free of clutter.



Customized Training

Bilingual Poll Workers.

A number of jurisdictions with a large percentage of limited-English proficiency voters have found it beneficial to offer customized classes for bilingual poll workers. Bilingual poll workers may speak English fluently, yet not be familiar with election terminology such as “roster” and “provisional ballot.” They may also not be comfortable enough with their English to ask questions in front of large audiences.

Alternatively, you can include bilingual poll workers in regular classes, but recruit experienced bilingual poll workers or interpreters who can assist in clarifying terminology and in answering questions. In the training class, speak clearly – limit slang and jargon – and leave time for questions.

- **High School and College Poll Workers.** High school and college students can be valuable additions to a poll-worker team. A number of jurisdictions are investing in customized training for students, because students are not necessarily familiar with the voting process and may feel more comfortable asking questions when surrounded by people their own age. Customized classes can be in the form of on-site training, perhaps conducted in the context of a civics course.
- **Roving Election Day Troubleshooters.** Developing and offering extensive training for roving Election Day troubleshooters can be a valuable investment. Time spent familiarizing them with the best methods for assisting poll workers and voters can prevent problems on Election Day. Provide troubleshooters with tips for identifying poll workers who might need extra assistance or supervision. Properly trained troubleshooters can help prevent late-opening polls.

Outsourcing Your Training

Outsourcing your training can bring new energy, perspectives and methods into the process.

Outsourcing is a growing trend, because many jurisdictions do not have the time to prepare, conduct and analyze a training program. Increasingly complicated election policies and procedures require more sophisticated training techniques to prepare poll workers for Election Day.

Benefits of Outsourcing

- Frees up staff time and energy for other priorities.



IFES Trainer Dan Murphy demonstrates a voting machine.

“The great thing about bringing in outside trainers who have an election background is that they are FRESH. They are not bogged down with all the everyday challenges of election preparation. They can focus and be positive when we’re managing other crises.” (Bill O’Field, D.C. Board of Elections and Ethics)

- Professional training institutions have extensive networks of trainers and can often expand capacity to fill a training team vacancy.
- Professional trainers (adult education specialists) have expertise in current training techniques

Evaluating Outsourced Training

- Determine if the contractor meets pre-determined requirements such as number of workers trained, specific skills covered in training and time frame for completion.
- Compare the evaluation of the outsourced training program at specific times leading up to the election to that of the training program in previous election cycles.
- Compare whether poll workers trained by the outside trainer are any more or less likely to attend training, serve on Election Day or return for future elections.

Model #1: Outsourcing to a Non-Profit Election

Organization. Jurisdictions such as Franklin County, Ohio, Cook County, Illinois, Monterey County, CA and Washington, DC have outsourced some or all of their training. Professional trainers revamp poll worker programs, including updating poll worker manuals, providing feedback on procedures and conducting poll worker training.

Model #2: Outsourcing to Community Colleges.

Jurisdictions such as Cuyahoga County, Ohio, the City of Detroit, Michigan and Guilford County, North Carolina have worked with community colleges to train and certify poll workers. In Detroit, Wayne County Community College grants college credit to each poll worker who completes a certified program involving three five-hour sessions.

Pitfalls and Challenges

- *Outsourcing is more expensive than in-house training.*

Tips and Adaptations

- *To save money, try outsourcing a portion of your training program and compare the results with training conducted by election staff.*
- *Trainers' scope of work can include developing materials, designing forms, organizing the curriculum, reviewing and developing training tools such as PowerPoint presentations, and conducting the actual training.*
- *Provide contractors with existing training materials, background information, a sense of the local training culture and expectations for the training.*
- *Hire trainers to conduct specialty classes such as those for bilingual poll workers, students and poll-worker trainers.*
- *Trainers can be hired as individual consultants, as temporary staff, or through a college or specialized institution.*
- *Hire trainers to develop an online training program to complement the face-to-face training conducted by in-house staff.*
- *Hire trainers to develop a video reference tool to be shared with poll workers after they have been trained for quick reference use.*

Evaluating the Training Program

In This Chapter:

- **Benefits of Evaluation**
- **Resources Needed**
- **Pitfalls and Challenges**
- **Adaptations**
- **Tips for Successful Implementation**

Evaluating your training program improves the effectiveness of your poll workers. To get a complete picture of the weaknesses of the training requires collecting information on poll-worker comprehension and performance, and analyzing that information. Every jurisdiction can easily implement one simple evaluation: an anonymous form given out at the end of the training session. The information gathered can also support budget requests for more resources to train poll workers.

In general, evaluating your training includes the following steps:

- Collect information on poll-worker performance in previous elections (for example, percent of polling places that opened late, number of voters directed to the wrong polling place, number of forms filled out incorrectly).
- Use this information to assess how much your poll workers get out of the training they are required to attend. Review the current training in light of the information collected.
- Based on the problems identified, decide what elements – content and methods – of the training to leave the same or change, and what to add or take out.
- Assess poll-worker understanding both after the training and on Election Day to determine if the training has improved since the last election.

Benefits of evaluation

Evaluating Poll Worker Training will:

- Determine whether the training is effective.
- Suggest ways to improve the program.
- Add credibility to the training program.



- Enable you to hold trainers accountable.
- Provide evidence to support requests for training resources.

Resources Needed

- **Election Day error reports.** You will need, for example, the log of questions that came in on Election Day from poll workers and voters. You will need to know how many forms were not filled out properly, and how many polling places were not opened or closed properly.
- **“Canvass” and “audit” reports.** Staff will need to collect and analyze data and provide recommendations for modifying the training curriculum. It will take longer the first time as you feel your way through the process.

Pitfalls and Challenges

- The first time you do this it will take some time, but stick with it!
- Evaluation can be a bit difficult when large numbers of poll workers give input. Consider obtaining some survey data online to speed up collection and analysis.

Adaptations

- Larger jurisdictions may target their evaluation to address issues specific to particular populations (language minorities) or regions (high mobility neighborhoods).
- Jurisdictions with limited resources should start by using the data available to them – Election Day error reports. Some jurisdictions evaluate every precinct operation and issue a “report card.” Problems that come up across the jurisdiction are handled at the next training. Precincts plagued with problems should get more support, or a new chief!
- You do not need to collect evaluation data from everyone who participates in a training program for it to be helpful. A 10-to-25 percent response rate is typical.

Section 5: Sample #38: Kennesaw State University Center for Election Systems: Poll Worker Training Evaluation

Tips for Successful Implementation

- *Ask other local government departments to share their evaluation expertise and resources with you.*
- *Don’t evaluate things that aren’t directly related to the training, that you don’t have control over, or that you don’t have the resources to address.*
- *Don’t get carried away. People earn doctorate degrees and sustain decades-long careers doing evaluation. Stay committed to making the poll workers more effective on Election Day.*

Appendix

Interactive Techniques

The more you engage your trainees in the training process, the better. Adding an interactive component to the training program can be as simple as sprinkling questions throughout the session, or as elaborate as devising a question-and-answer game with prizes. Not only should poll workers be encouraged to ask questions during training, the trainer should also pose questions to the poll workers throughout the session. Asking questions will help you:

- Assess what people already know.
- Determine if participants understand the material.
- Engage the participants.
- Call attention to a particularly important or complex issue.
- Stress a key point, concept, or procedure.

Questions also facilitate interaction among the trainees. After presenting a topic, give participants a few questions they can answer individually, then ask them to compare their answers in a small group.

Consider asking trick questions to keep everyone on their toes and inject a little humor into the training session.

Even simple games inject a lot of energy into any training session. For example, pose questions that individuals or teams compete to answer first. Or create Jeopardy-style categories from important training topics and develop five questions for each. Consider awarding prizes for each correct answer or the highest cumulative score.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ): Create a sheet of 10 to 20 typical questions and answers based on the training topics. Give this to participants to take away from the training. If designed correctly, it could serve as a job aid on Election Day.

Tips for Successful Implementation

- Encourage poll workers to ask questions throughout the training session. Telling them to hold all their questions until the end increases the likelihood that their attention will wander.
- Intersperse short content presentations of five to seven minutes with periods for questions.

Interactive Training Should Be Used To:

- *Keep poll workers engaged in the training.*
 - *Reinforce key information that poll workers must know on Election Day.*
 - *Help poll workers determine for themselves what they don't know.*
 - *Encourage interaction among poll workers.*
-

- Make sure you KNOW the answers to the questions you ask and plan how to handle incorrect answers from the participants. Figure out how to handle questions that stump you, and bring knowledgeable colleagues and the election manual.
- Make questions specific. For example, ask: “What are the four conditions under which a voter should be given a provisional ballot?” rather than: “Do you understand provisional ballots?” This tells participants there is a correct answer, that incorrect answers are unacceptable, and that they will be accountable to know this information.
- Clarify how and when participants may ask questions during the training: At any time? After each short presentation? Written on index cards?
- Explain that you use questions to gauge experience and understanding, to reinforce the presentations, and to have fun.

Sample Interactive Training Exercise

Engaging Your Poll Workers: Twenty Questions

Posing questions to poll workers can be a fun and effective way to preview and review the most important points covered in class. By calling out responses as a group, poll workers are less likely to feel they are being tested.

Play the first ten questions at the beginning of class. Including silly responses with the correct ones can be an engaging ice-breaker. Remind veteran poll workers that there may be some changes since the last time they served, and advise new poll workers to note the new terms that will make sense to them by the end of class.

Play the second set of 10 questions near the end of the training sessions. Consider rewording some of the first ten questions so that you can note which poll workers “got it,” which ones are confused or stubbornly “holding on to how it used to be,” and which themes may need to be emphasized in future training sessions.

How to Prepare Your Twenty Questions. Choosing the best set of questions may take a bit of time. Work with staff and veteran poll workers to identify the key issues that trainees must understand. Be sure to include questions that relate to new procedures.

Tips for Implementation:

- *Be sure that your answer key is correct. One jurisdiction reported that the training class descended into chaos when the answer key contained incorrect answers!*
- *After you ask a question, leave time for the poll workers to formulate a response. If they give an incorrect answer, ask them why they came up with that answer and if anyone else can think of a reason it might be different.*
- *Poll workers should be given a copy of the questions, either before they come to class or as they begin training. Trainers note that poll workers seem to understand the questions better if they can read the words.*

“Twenty Questions”

(Sample Courtesy of the DC Board of Elections and Ethics)

Use this old game of “Twenty Questions” to review the key points you picked up at training class. Below are the twenty questions for your review:

SET ONE (First 10 questions)

1. Are all registered voters eligible to vote in the November Presidential Election? (Circle one)

Yes	No
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2. What does the Check-in Clerk do if a voter’s name and address are not in the Master Index? (Select one)
 - a. Tell the voter to go home.
 - b. Refer Voter to the Special Ballot Clerk to verify in the Master Street Index if the Voter is in the correct precinct.

3. What can the Special Ballot Clerk and the Ballot Box Clerk do to ensure that a Special Ballot “Provisional” Voter does NOT accidentally cast his or her Special Ballot in the Optical Scan Reader? (Circle all that apply)
 - a. Ballot Box Clerks should keep an eye out for voters carrying envelopes and for ballots stamped “Special”.
 - b. Ballot Box Clerks should put a sign marked “Special Ballot Votes Not Welcome” on top of the optical scan counter.
 - c. Special Ballot Clerks should ensure that Special Ballot voters mark their ballot in the area near the Special Ballot Clerk and place the voted ballot immediately in the Secrecy Envelope and the Special Ballot envelope provided.

4. If a registered voter who is NOT in the correct precinct casts a Special Ballot, will it be counted? (Select one)
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. No, EXCEPT for Voters with Disabilities, Elderly Voters and Poll Workers working out-of-precinct.

5. Is identification required for all voters?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
 - c. No, only for voters identified in the Master Index as “ID Required”.



6. Voter One has signed the Master Index on the line that is for Voter Two's signature. What should the Check-in Clerk do? (Circle all that apply)
- a. Instruct Voter One to sign on the correct line and issue a regular ballot to Voter One, requiring Voter Two to vote a Special Ballot.
 - b. Instruct Voter Two to scribble out Voter One's name and sign above it.
 - c. Get out some white-out and fix it.
 - d. Check-in Clerk should check "Other" on the Special Ballot Referral Form and write "Previous voter signed on the wrong line."
7. Which of the following are the responsibilities of the Special Ballot Clerk? (Circle all that apply)
- a. Check voter addresses in the Master Street Index.
 - b. Check Voter's Special Ballot Referral Form for reason for referral.
 - c. Direct voter, if in a wrong precinct, to correct precinct where their vote will be counted.
 - d. Give the voter a Special Ballot Envelope and instruct voter on how to complete all parts of the form.
 - e. Ensure that Special Ballot Voters receive a ballot stamped "Special".
 - f. Complete Election Worker's Certification Box on the Special Ballot Envelope.
 - g. Tell voter you will be happy to go get a regular ballot for them from the Ballot Clerk.
8. Which of the following are the responsibilities of the Ballot Clerk: (Circle all that apply)
- a. Tell the voters which ballot they should choose.
 - b. Account for all paper ballots.
 - c. Place voter cards into the appropriate cardboard box ("Touch Screen" or "Optical Scan").
 - d. Call out name of voter two times for poll watchers.
9. Who is responsible for processing a "Spoiled Ballot"?
- a. Special Ballot Clerk
 - b. Ballot Clerk
10. Who is responsible for processing a curbside voter? (Circle all that apply)
- a. Ballot Box Clerk
 - b. Voting Demonstration Clerk



c. Precinct Captain

Set One Answer Key: (1) Yes (2) A (3) A, C (4) C (5) C (6) A, D (7) All except G (8) B, C, D (9) B (10) B, C

SET TWO**(Second 10 questions)**

1. Why does the phrase “The Voting Never Stops” apply to elections conducted in Washington, DC?
 - a. Voters can vote as many times as they want to on Election Day.
 - b. In the unlikely event that both the touchscreen unit and the optical scan reader are not working, voters may still vote on paper ballots. Voters mark their ballots as usual, and voted ballots are stored in a secure bin within the optical scan counter until the units are again functioning.
2. Can a Poll Watcher or Precinct Captain challenge a voter on Election Day?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
3. Can a voter who requested an absentee ballot, but never received it in the mail, vote in their precinct on Election Day?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
4. Can a poll worker, who has not voted when he or she is reassigned to another precinct the night before Election Day, vote in the precinct they were just assigned to, even if it is not their precinct of residence?
 - a. Yes, vote a regular ballot.
 - b. Yes, vote a Special Ballot.
 - c. No
5. Can a voter do a “write-in candidate” on the Optical Scan and on the Touch Screen voting systems?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No
6. What should be done if a voter wants to cast a blank ballot?
 - a. Nothing, because a voter has a right to vote the ballot as desired.
 - b. Tell voter they have wasted their ballot and can’t have another one.



7. What should be done if a voter leaves the Touch Screen voting booth before selecting “Cast Ballot”? (Circle all that apply.)
- Cancel the vote.
 - Finish voting for the voter.
 - Ballot Clerk or Precinct Technician should tell the Precinct Captain.
 - Only the Precinct Captain can remedy the situation.
8. How many paper ballots can a voter spoil? (Select one or more.)
- A voter is not limited in the number of ballots they can spoil.
 - If a voter spoils more than two ballots, ask if they would like a demonstration.
 - Only one paper ballot.
9. How should a voter with disabilities be treated? (Select more than one)
- With respect and dignity.
 - Be considerate of extra time it may take, and never hurry the voter.
 - Always speak directly to the voter and not the companion, aide, or sign language interpreter.
 - If voter is visually impaired, play with the dog while the voter votes.
 - Ask before you help and do not insist on helping.
10. In case of emergency, what should you do? (Select all that apply.)
- Precinct captain should take special ballot box, paper ballots, voter cards, and master index books and assign each poll worker a duty.
 - Notify BOEE of emergency.
 - Poll workers should direct voters and Poll Watchers to the nearest exit.
 - Run out of the voting precinct and go home.
 - Precinct Technician should record public counter numbers on each machine and note the time of day.
 - Call 911 first.
 - Read your manual’s emergency procedures prior to Election Day.

Set Two Answer Key: (1) B (2) Yes (3) Yes (4) B (5) Yes (6) A (7) A and C (8) A and B (9) A, B, C, E (10) All but D

Benefits

- *Organizing a training program according to poll-worker positions allows trainers to go into more depth about specific procedures and forms. They can also create customized role-play scenarios. Moreover, poll workers appreciate seeing exactly what they are supposed to do on Election Day, and can ask more focused questions.*
- *Separating new and experienced poll workers allows trainers to tailor the presentation of material to the different needs of the groups. With new poll workers, trainers can move slowly to ensure that all the basic topics are covered. With more experienced poll workers, trainers can review basic points and then devote more time to new or complicated procedures.*

Pitfalls and Challenges

- *Differentiation of training according to poll-worker position creates additional logistical challenges. Assignment to training classes requires more coordination than for one-size-fits-all programs, and if a poll worker assigned to a specific job does not show up on Election Day, this leaves a vacancy in the poll-worker team’s skill set.*
- *Classes differentiated by experience may lead to uneven class sizes.*
- *Trainers may assume that experienced poll workers have a greater knowledge base than they actually possess.*

Differentiation by Position and Experience

Use Differentiated Training to:

- Ensure thorough coverage of topics for novice poll workers.
- Enable experienced poll workers to develop expertise in specific areas.
- Provide in-depth coverage of position-specific duties, such as the electronic poll book.
- Create precinct teams of complementarily-skilled individuals rather than generalists.

There are differences of opinion on the benefits and disadvantages of tailoring poll-worker

training to specific positions and skill levels. Jurisdictions should explore and adapt practices appropriate for their environment.

Adaptations

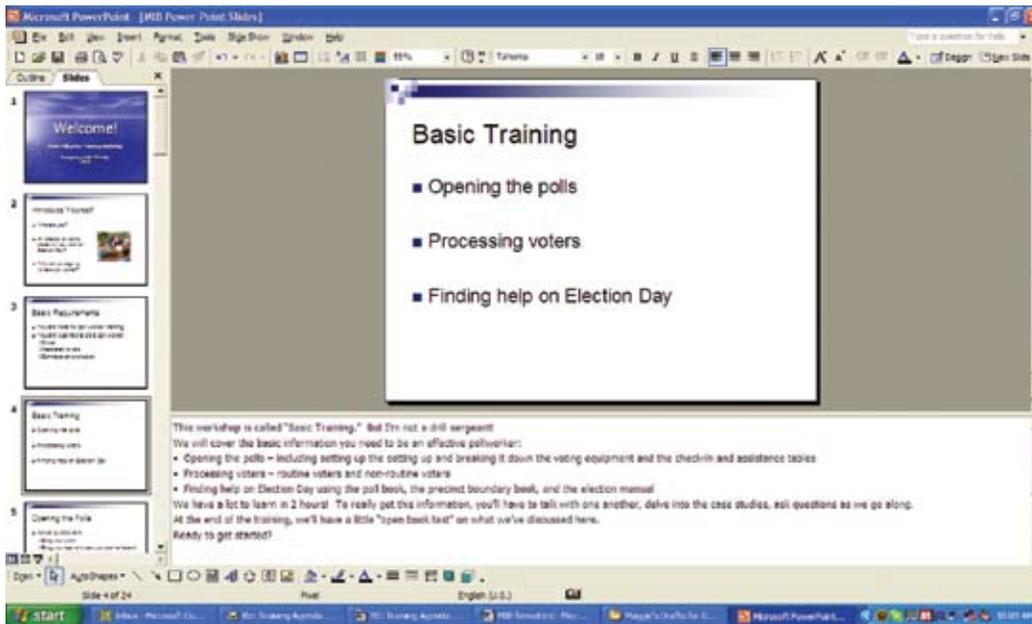
- Jurisdictions may wish to conduct general training before a Primary Election to ensure that everyone is familiar with all of the basic issues. They can change the format prior to the General Election, so that poll workers can use their recent experience to ask specific questions and participate in more focused role-playing.

Section 5: Sample #36: Sample Check-in-Clerk Job Guide from District of Columbia's BOEE)

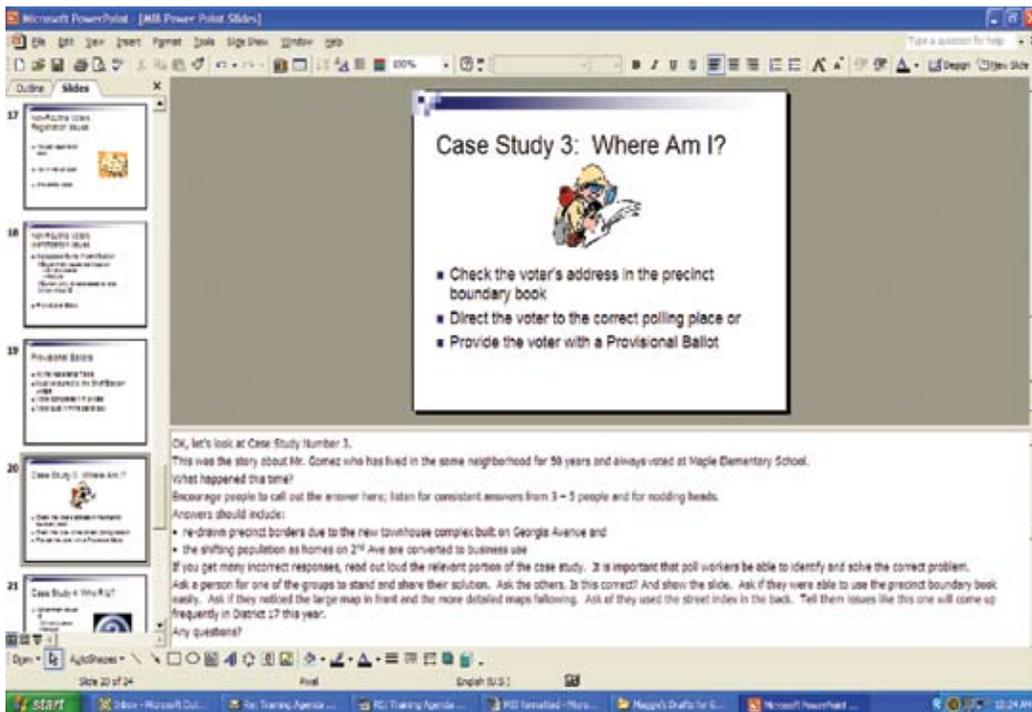
PowerPoint Presentation

Imaginary County Basic Poll worker Training Workshop Power Point Slides

Slide Number	Title
Slide 1	Welcome
Slide 2	Opening Activity
Slide 3	Opening Activity – Objectives of the workshop
Slide 4	Before Election Day
Slide 5	Before Election Day
Slide 6	Opening the Polls
Slide 7	Opening the Polls
Slide 8	Troubleshooting Scenario #1 and Solution
Slide 9	Troubleshooting Scenario #2 and Solution
Slide 10	Processing Voters
Slide 11	Processing Voters
Slide 12	Processing Voters
Slide 13	Processing Voters
Slide 14	Processing Voters
Slide 15	Processing Voters
Slide 16	Troubleshooting Scenario #3 and Solution
Slide 17	Closing the Polls
Slide 18	Closing the Polls
Slide 19	Returning Supplies
Slide 20	Troubleshooting Scenario #4 and Solution
Slide 21	Troubleshooting Scenario #5 and Solution
Slide 22	Troubleshooting Scenario #6 and Solution
Slide 23	Assessment – Are you ready?
Slide 24	Evaluation – How did we do today?



This is the third slide in the presentation. This is what the presenter will see on her computer (participants will only see the slide). Notice the detailed talking points in the Notes section at the bottom of the screen. Using the Notes section helps ensure consistency in your presentations.



This is slide 20 in the presentation. Again, see the notes in the bottom of the screen. These notes guide the presenter to engage the participants in conversation about the case study, rather than just telling them the solution.

SAMPLE TRAINING AGENDA

I. Welcome

- a. What's New? (curbside voting doorbell for accessibility, ability to cast provisional ballots on touchscreen unit, new security procedure)

II. Expectation of the Training Class

- a. Class will be 2 hours plus 30 minutes for hands-on training
- b. Housekeeping (cell phones, hand-outs, etc.)
- c. Importance of consistency

III. "Twenty Questions" Game (1st set of 10 questions)

IV. Overview of "Perfect Polling Place"

V. Overview of Job Descriptions

- a. Precinct Captain
- b. Voter Demonstration Clerk
- c. Check-in Clerk
- d. Ballot Clerk
- e. Ballot Box Clerk
- f. Special Ballot Clerk
- g. Precinct Technician

VI. Opening Procedures

VII. Processing Voters (Role-Playing)

- a. "Perfect Voter" (check-in and vote)
- b. Voter not found in Roster
- c. Provisional Voter
- d. Voter marked "Absentee Ballot Requested" in Roster

VIII. Closing Procedures

IX. "Twenty Questions" Game (2nd set of 10 questions)

X. Hands-on exercises with voting equipment (set-up, opening, processing a voter, closing, tear-down)

Tip!

Post the Training Agenda on a large easel or Post-It at the front of the room. It will keep you – and your audience – focused!

SAMPLE TRAINING AGENDA

*Training Methods Used: In-Class Exercises, Interactive Training,
PowerPoint Presentation*

Time	Who	Topic	Facilitation	Methods/ Media
5 Minutes	Presenters and Participants	Welcome	Introductions of presenter and elections staff	Show Slides 1 - 2
10 Minutes	Presenter 1	Opening Activity	Review the objectives of the training	Show slides 3-4
5 minutes	Presenter 2	Content	Opening the Polls	Show slides 5-7
10 minutes	Presenter 1	Demon-stration	Set up the voting equipment	Voting equipment
20 minutes	Participants Presenter 2	Scenarios 1-2	Have participants break into groups of 6 to read and solve the scenarios Have one group share their solution to each of the 2 scenarios	Scenarios 1 – 2 Slides 8 – 9
15 minutes	Presenter 1	Content	Processing Voters	Show slides 10-19
30 minutes	Participants Presenter 2	Scenarios 3-5	Have each group of 6 resolve each of the scenarios Announce the solutions to the case studies; check for agreement and alternatives.	Scenarios 3 – 5 Slides 20-22
15 minutes	Participants	Assessment	Have each participant complete the evaluation independently. Review the answers. Provide take-home copies	Assessment Slide 23
10 minutes	Presenters	Evaluation	Refer participants to FAQ for instructions on getting Election Day assignments. Distribute evaluations.	Evaluation FAQ Slide 24

Sample Training Agenda

I. Training Workshop Title: Basic Poll Worker Training Workshop

II. Workshop Objectives

All Imaginary Lake County poll workers should learn how to:

- Set up, operate, and break down the voting equipment.
- Process voters.
- Find help on Election Day.

III. Workshop Preparation

Component	Purpose	Description
Method of Delivery	The training workshop is best presented in 2 hours to groups of 18, 24, 30, or 36 participants	Options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♣ Morning session ♣ Afternoon session ♣ Evening session
Presenter	This workshop is best presented by a team of 2 presenters	Options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♣ Elections staff or leadership ♣ Poll worker peer ♣ Subject area expert
Invitation/ Announcement	ROV will send invitations and register the prospective poll workers for the training sessions	Options: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ♣ Email or snail mail ♣ When and where ♣ Why they are attending the training ♣ Info on training bonus if appropriate

IV. Workshop Setting

- Location/Duration:
 - Oliver Street Library, Community Room # 2, 7:00 a.m. – 9:00 a.m., Thursday, September 7, 2006
 - Site Contact: Linda Jones, Head Librarian, xxx-xxx-xxx
- Maximum No. of Participants:
 - 18 participants may register for this training session.
 - Get the class list from ROV on Tuesday, September 5, 2006, xxx-xxx-xxxx.
- Room set-up:
 - Arrange tables in a “U” in the center of the room with the open end toward the screen.
 - Set up the projector/computer facing the screen.

- Set up the voting equipment in one corner of the room.
- Place the Case Study Sets on another table.
- Adaptation for More Participants:
 - Expand the number of participants by multiples of 6.
 - Arrange the room so people are seated in groups of 6 from the beginning.
 - Have one piece of voting equipment for every 4 groups.
 - Have a Case Study Set for every 3 groups (have them share).
 - Have one facilitator (staff member or additional trainer) for every 4 groups.

V. Workshop Handouts

Bring one for each participant except where noted:

- Basic Poll Worker Training Workshop Frequently-Asked-Questions (called FAQ)
- Basic Poll-Worker Training Workshop Case Studies # 1 -5
- Voting Equipment Job Aid (copy of laminated sheet that will be at polling place)
- Basic Poll-Worker Assessment (bring 2x the number of participants)
- Basic Poll-Worker Training Workshop Evaluation

VI. Workshop Materials

- Laptop computer, projector, screen
- Voting Equipment (for demonstration and solving case study 1 and 2)
- Case Study Set (one set for every 6 participants):
 - “Dummy” Poll Book (for solving case study 3)
 - Precinct Boundary Book (for solving case study 4)
 - Election Manual (for solving case study 5)

