

# How To: Have a great phone call

## Be polite

- Start by introducing yourself. Let them know you're a volunteer with Environment Victoria, and you're calling to know what issues people in the community care about.
- Take your time and speak clearly and concisely. Try to resist the urge to rush through questions - we want to build genuine connections with people.

## Be positive

- We all love to talk to cheerful, friendly voices. So, smile - even though they can't see you, they'll be able to hear that you're smiling!
- Don't forget to use your sense of humour, we can always use a laugh!
- You may speak to a lot of people who don't want to talk for various reasons. Try to not get irritated - simply thank them for their time and move on to the next conversation.
- If you have a negative interaction, give yourself a break to have a snack and get refreshed before the next call. Maybe talk to another volunteer or give your coordinator a call if you need to debrief or just have a friendly word!

We want the phone call to be a persuasive conversation, so that voters are inspired to take action for clean energy. The key is engaging with people's *values*.

- Start the conversation by asking some general questions about the environment to establish common ground. Explore the person's attitude towards environmental issues and how much they care - this helps you build rapport and get comfortable with the conversation.
- Pay attention to what the person cares about and what matters to them. Asking compassionate and open-ended questions will help you to dig deeper into their values. You can share your story and ask probing follow-up questions that engage intrinsic values, for example:

*"The reason I'm volunteering for Environment Victoria is...that I'm really worried about climate change. I grew up in the bush, and I can see droughts and bushfires getting worse.*

Using active listening, responding to what they've said by engaging with intrinsic values and looking for a pivot to clean energy. E.g.

- *It must be so frustrating that [there is so much litter on the beach]. Frankston is so beautiful, you must really want to be proud of where you live, and to look after it.*
- *It must be really hard that [you worry there's too much crime]. It's so important to feel safe, and you must really worry about your neighbours and friends.*

- Although you'll be following a script, every call you make will be different depending on the actual person and their context. So it's important to be flexible. Use active listening, don't read off the script robotically, tweak the dialogue accordingly and respond to what has been said. Make sure you practice a couple of time, particularly your opening line.

Do	Don't
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Take some time before starting calls to think about why you care about climate change</li> <li>• Smile you're talking - they'll hear it in your voice!</li> <li>• Practice active listening and ask open ended questions</li> <li>• Engage with people's values and concerns</li> <li>• Be polite and positive</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Don't be rude or aggressive</li> <li>• Don't ignore people's concerns</li> <li>• Don't get bogged down with time-wasters</li> <li>• Don't speak super quickly and rush through the script - take a breath and slow down</li> </ul>