

Game-Changing Libertarian Communications

Techniques for Libertarian Candidates and Activists

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A message for candidates and other readers of this guide...

Dear Fellow Libertarian,

This guide is designed to make you a game changer in your Libertarian campaign. It's also extremely useful for Libertarian spokespersons and campaign supporters – and anyone serious about advancing freedom.

We're in an epic battle against Big Government. Your campaign, win or lose, has the potential to profoundly shift political discourse, and ultimately, to put America on a course for small government, peace, prosperity and personal freedom.

To achieve this, you must market liberty effectively.

The strategies and techniques described in this guide will enable and empower you to:

- expose Big Government as dangerous, reckless, dysfunctional, and extreme;
- paint a picture of small government as civil, responsible, workable and desirable;
- show voters that a small, libertarian government is *possible*; and
- maximize your Libertarian vote total.

Use this guide to formulate your Libertarian campaign platform, refine your sales pitch, and write campaign material (speeches, websites, Facebook posts, news releases, ads, survey responses, hand cards, and brochures).

Use the appendices to prepare for interviews and debates. Use the checklist in the section “Bring a checklist to every speech and interview” for all your public appearances.

Above all, read the sections pertaining to *benefits* and incorporate them into all aspects of your campaign communications. They are the key to running a high-impact Libertarian campaign.

You can read this guide in less than 57 minutes. It is one of the most worthwhile investments you can make in your campaign. Please read it cover to cover at least once and refer to it often.

Thank you for running for office and for all you do. You are a true American patriot.

Yours in liberty,



Carla Howell
Political Director
Libertarian National Committee

Go on the offensive

Government in America today is huge. Consider the number of:

- Government regulations (hundreds of thousands)
- Laws (tens of thousands – or more)
- Dollars federal, state, and local governments collect in taxes (trillions)
- Dollars they spend (trillions)
- Dollars of debt (tens of trillions)
- Types of taxes (hundreds)
- Areas into which governments have intruded and don't belong (too many to count)
- Foreign interventions (several at once has become the norm) and
- U.S. military bases (thousands)

By every measure, federal, state and local governments in the United States are astronomical.

Democratic and Republican politicians make government big by continually pumping out proposals to expand it: new taxes, higher taxes, more regulations, more prohibitions, more wars, more programs, more bureaucracies, higher government spending, and more government debt.

Every time they propose more government, they are on the *offensive*.

Liberty advocates oppose Big Government. But few offer a way to *shrink* it. They're on the *defensive*. Libertarian solutions to *shrink* government are MIA - *missing in action*.

If Libertarian candidates neglect to spell out ways to downsize Big Government, the only proposals left on the table are those of our Big Government opponents.

This reinforces the idea that Big Government and high taxes can never change. It conditions voters to expect, and accept, more Big Government.

This one-sided condition plays right into the hands of our opponents. They love it! It keeps small government, libertarian options *off the table*.

We need to put libertarian proposals *on the table* and *keep them there*. Rally for them constantly.

If we stay on the defensive, voters in America will remain complacent, will sit out elections and not vote, or will vote for Big Government candidates. They do so because we failed to give them a small government alternative.

Libertarians must never cede ground this way. We must go on the *offensive*. We must show voters that we *can* remove damaging and destructive laws and regulations.

Make it your campaign's number one goal to lay out and publicize your proposals to *reduce* Big Government every time you reach voters: in your campaign literature, website, social media, speeches, media interviews, and in public debates.

By beating the drum for small government – constantly -- you make liberty possible.

LP solutions create mandate for change

No elected Libertarian is likely to end the war on drugs, repeal Obamacare, drive down taxes, or achieve any other Libertarian goal *unless he or she campaigned on the issue*.

All elected officials are under constant pressure to expand government. They are deluged daily by advocates for Big Government: government employees, government contractors, fellow politicians and lobbyists. All of these groups push for more government. They ostracize, dismiss and attack anyone who stands in their way.

The mainstream media puts pressure on officeholders as well. Typical media coverage praises politicians for expanding government and discredits those who resist it.

Meanwhile, the silent majority of voters who want less government go home after Election Day. They shift their focus back to their jobs, school, family, and other personal interests.

It is primarily *during campaigns* when Libertarians have a podium to reach the masses. To recruit new Libertarians. To plant the seeds of libertarian ideas in voters' minds.

On Election Day, the mike turns off. The Big Government media takes control of what is talked about and considered in the news. Libertarians who were covered during campaign season no longer get interviews.

If voters elect you, you will probably be the only Libertarian in the body where you serve, fighting from a disadvantaged, minority position. *To have any chance of advancing your Libertarian agenda in office, you must be able to say that voters elected you to enact your Libertarian proposal – because you ran on it.*

Otherwise, you will have a difficult time getting anyone to take you seriously.

Some claim that you can run for office on a moderate or vaguely Libertarian platform, then govern as a Libertarian once in office. But with no mandate, you will have kissed away the bulk of your power and influence as an elected Libertarian.

If you campaign and win on a proposal for less government, now you have a powerful tool: a mandate for change that no one can deny. You will have the leverage you need to stand up to the forces of Big Government and demand change.

Who's your customer?

Don't sell to those who won't buy

You wouldn't try to sell meat to vegetarians. Why try to sell your Libertarian solutions to people who, predictably, won't buy them?

The voters who are least likely to vote Libertarian are extreme social conservatives, die-hard progressives, loyal Republican and Democratic voters, and people dependent on government (government employees and contractors, cartel members whose trade is protected by government, and union members in government-funded industries).

Energy spent trying to change their vote usually yields a low return on your investment. Save your energy for low-hanging fruit: voters who will listen with an open mind and might actually vote for you.

If you're not sure whether they're committed to voting for another candidate, try asking them. Often, they will tell you.

Your target audience

Put your attention on the remaining voters – a majority - who are open to your message, and who fall in one of three groups.

About 45 million Americans (15%) identify as libertarian, especially those born after 1985. They want more freedom and disdain Big Government. They're strongly on your side. You do not need to convince them that you're the best candidate.

About another 90 million Americans (36%) lean libertarian and oppose Big Government. They prefer you over your opponents

The remaining voters fall somewhere between "lean Libertarian" and "no way." Those who lean Big Government within this group will listen and consider what you have to offer. If they don't vote Libertarian this election, they may in the future.

Many of the voters in these three groups are disenchanted by, if not disapproving of, Democrats and Republicans in office today. They are troubled by politicians' high spending and growing authority. They favor at least some libertarian ideas.

But most of them are also susceptible to the "spoiler" argument. They fear that voting for you will cause whichever of the Democrat or Republican they dislike most to win. To prevent this, they will vote for the "lesser of two evils."

To have an impact on all of these groups, you need to make crystal clear:

- What you will do for them if elected,

- How it's distinct from what your opponents will do,
- How your proposal(s) will give voters substantial benefits that make you worth voting for, in spite of any reservations they may have.

Libertarian Gold Mine: today's non-voters

Consider: A majority of Americans may well prefer to see Libertarian candidates in office over either Democrats or Republicans.

If that is so, then why don't Libertarians win most elections?

One big reason is voter turnout.

Voters who refuse to vote Libertarian are far more inclined to show up at the polls. They include government welfare beneficiaries, government employees, government contractors, corporate and union cronies, and ideologues committed to some aspect of Big Government.

Conversely, the groups which are more open to voting Libertarian tend not to vote. They don't get much, if any, government largess, so they are less motivated to vote than those who do.

They appear apathetic. But if you scratch below the surface, most of them care a great deal about government policy. They would change it if they thought they could, but they feel powerless. They are deeply resigned – but not irrecoverably.

You won't inspire them if you sound like another Democrat or Republican politician. Or if you're on the defensive and all you do is say "no" to more Big Government.

You're already at a disadvantage running as a Libertarian. So you must shake things up.

You have a shot at turning around these non-voters if you persuade them that less government and more liberty are *possible*.

Do this by offering *specific proposals for much less government*. Most of them have never heard a serious proposal to shrink government in their lives. Until they do, no possibility exists. Your words, repeated constantly, make it real.

At first they may be skeptical. But after they hear your proposal five or ten times, it starts to sound feasible. Then normal. Then highly desirable. *Repetition is the key*.

The more voters hear your Libertarian solution, and the more you show them why it will make a difference – *to them*, the more possible it becomes. And the more willing they will be to give up their resignation and vote for you on Election Day.

By lighting a fire in their hearts, you will tap a potential Libertarian Gold Mine: the silent majority of voters who want less government and more liberty.

The competition for libertarian-leaning, independent voters

Democrats and Republicans are going after the same libertarian-leaning and independent voters that you are. They need them to get elected.

To attract these voters, Democrats and Republicans attempt to appeal to the “left” and the “right.” They make impassioned claims that they are either fiscally conservative or socially liberal.

But if you score most Democratic and Republican politicians using the World’s Smallest Political Quiz (also known as the Nolan Chart) *based on how they vote*, they would *not* land in the left nor right quadrants, nor in the middle.

Rather, the vast majority of both Democratic and Republican politicians would score in the *bottom* of the lower quadrant: near zero out of ten on social issues and near zero out of ten on economic issues. The Quiz would say they *govern* as authoritarians.

To cover up their real nature, Democratic and Republican politicians talk a good game. They learn how to *sound* pro-freedom -- while they artfully *avoid* discussion of shrinking government in any meaningful way.

They say they’re against government waste – but leave waste intact when elected. They vote to expand government, which adds *more* waste.

They propose tiny tax cuts, targeted tax cuts or vague “tax relief.” But they virtually never vote for tax cuts that most voters would enjoy and that cause total tax revenue to go down. They want to keep tax revenues rolling in. They want total taxes to go *up*.

They say they’re for cutting spending, but vote for bigger budgets.

In essence, Democratic and Republican politicians are con artists. *Freedom Frauds*.

Libertarian proposals that distinguish you

Running as a Libertarian, how do you expose Big Government Democrats and Republicans as the Freedom Frauds that they are?

How do you distinguish yourself enough from your opponents so that voters give up voting for the “lesser of two evils?”

How do you get non-voters who agree with you to give up their resignation and vote?

To move these voters into your camp, you must draw a stark contrast between you and your Democratic and Republican opponents.

Critical Job # 1: Distinguish yourself with Libertarian solutions

Draw a contrast between you and your opponents by laying out specific Libertarian solutions to shrink Big Government that:

- voters *want*, and
- both the Democrat and Republican will oppose.

Libertarian solutions that distinguish you from your Big Government opponents have the following characteristics:

1. They substantially shrink government and never expand it. (Your opponents want to keep Big Government big and make it *bigger*.)
2. They bring down total spending. (Your opponents want to raise government spending.)
3. They call for specific reductions in government and promise specific actions you would take if elected. (Your opponents want to be vague, hoping no one will notice that they haven't promised anything other than more Big Government.)

Negotiate wisely

If you want to buy a house that's overpriced, do you offer the asking price?

No, you offer something lower than what you're willing to pay. You and the seller settle on a price somewhere in the middle.

By proposing a lower price, you're bringing the market price down. You're moving the bar.

To advance liberty, you must move the bar in the direction of liberty.

Don't merely refute your opponents' proposals for more government. Replace them with proposals to *reduce* it.

If all you do is oppose the expansion of government, the best that can happen is you win – but nothing changes. Big Government stays big. Liberty loses.

But if you propose bold, credible ways of *shrinking* government, you're creating a possibility for less government and more liberty.

You're shattering the Big Government box our opponents want to keep voters stuffed inside. You're creating a whole new realm of possibility: freedom, peace, and prosperity.

Negotiate wisely. Force your Big Government opponents to go on the defensive. Set the agenda -- for liberty and much less government.

Include spending cuts in your Libertarian proposals

Promising to cut government spending is critically important and should be part of most Libertarian campaigns for offices that have spending authority.

Almost every law, regulation, foreign intervention, or government program requires funding to administer and enforce – whether it addresses civil or economic liberties. By tightening Big Government's purse, you take away its power to deny freedom in both areas.

There are rare exceptions such as legalizing gay marriage, which expands freedom but does not change government budgets appreciably.

Cut *total* government spending

Don't cut spending in one area of government without proposing to cut *total* government spending.

Offer to either cut taxes or reduce the deficit (or both) with the proceeds from your spending cut. Otherwise politicians will spend the freed-up money on another dysfunctional, wasteful, and damaging Big Government program.

Democrats and Republicans call for cutting spending to “free up money for schools” or some other area of government that is already overfunded and in need of *downsizing*. Our approach should always be to give that money back to the taxpayers who earned it. *Never* opt to keep money in government coffers.

Cut government spending *now*

If you're family is broke, would you say to your spouse, "let's buy a pool for the backyard and work on balancing our family budget over the next ten years?"

Of course not. You would say, "The pool is out of the question until we can afford it."

Federal politicians are buying unneeded, unaffordable government programs everyday with little restraint. They are addicted to spending, raising the debt, and inflating the dollar.

They pass "ten-year budgets" that continually increase spending. They then try to take credit for "cutting spending" by reducing the *increase* in future budgets.

Don't ever let them suck you into manipulating voters this way.

Never talk about future budgets. Always talk about cutting government spending *now* from *today's* high budgets – just as families and businesses are forced to do when revenue is down.

Propose specific ways to reduce Big Government

Democratic and Republican politicians want to appear to be against Big Government. But when it comes to downsizing it, they use words that avoid committing themselves to actually shrinking government.

They say they're "in favor of" or "believe in" less government or more freedom. They say they "oppose" existing functions of government or that they will "defend the Constitution."

They say they "support" small businesses and "stand up for" gun owners. They claim to be "fiscally conservative," "socially liberal," and even "libertarian." They say they want to "keep taxes down" or "fight to cut taxes."

But do such statements have any substance? No. They promise nothing. They leave enough wiggle room to make excuses for voting to expand Big Government when in office, which is exactly what Democrats and Republicans do - routinely.

If you use similar language, you look and sound the same as your opponents. There's no reason to believe you would be any different if elected.

You must distinguish yourself and expose your opponent's real intentions by proposing *specific reductions in government* and by promising *specific actions you will take* to bring about the changes you propose.

This will force your opponents to come out against your proposal and expose them for what they are: enemies of economic freedom, civil liberties, and peace.

You will be the only one for liberty left standing.

Examples of Libertarian solutions

The following Libertarian solutions reduce the size, scope, authority, taxation, spending, interventions, debt, and/or assets of government:

- Repeal a specific law or body of laws, e.g., all federal laws that drive up the cost of health care
- Dramatically lower or eliminate the income tax, sales tax, or property tax
- Eliminate other common taxes
- End a government program or policy and all spending associated with it
- Immediately cut spending across the board by an amount that your Republican opponent wouldn't dare (e.g., 25%, 50%, or 75%)
- Balance the budget now without ever raising taxes or tax revenue.
- End a prohibition, e.g., the War on Drugs
- Remove government regulations, e.g., 90% of all regulations that inhibit small business creation or growth
- Dismantle and defund unneeded federal, state and local bureaucracies.
- Downsize bloated agencies to a small size that protects our lives, liberty and property – and no more.
- De-authorize certain powers of a government agency
- Bring government employee pensions and benefits in line with the private sector's
- Nullify a federal law
- Sell off government assets to pay off government debt
- Sell off government assets to fund and privatize Social Security (but *never* use it to pay for bloated government worker retirement benefits)
- Withdraw from foreign entanglements immediately.

Actions like these clearly distinguish you from your Republican and Democratic opponents.

Promise specific actions you will take if elected

Once you've identified the specific solutions for shrinking government to run on, further contrast yourself from your opponents by taking it to the next step: Show voters that you're committed to making your proposals a reality by promising specific *actions you will take* if elected.

Here are some specific actions an elected legislator, board or council member can take:

- Propose, sponsor or co-sponsor legislation.
- Work tirelessly to pass legislation that shrinks government.
- Vote for bills that shrink government; vote against every bill that expands government.
- Vote against bills that fund departments that should not exist
- Vote to confirm only judges and other appointees who strictly obey the constitution; vote *against* confirmation of any who do not.

Here are some specific actions an elected executive (governor or president) can take:

- Order law enforcement personnel and judicial appointees to stop enforcing bad laws and prohibitions
- Propose and work to advance legislation
- Sign into law bills that shrink government.
- Veto every law that expands government
- Issue executive orders.
- Revoke existing executive orders.
- Appoint judges who strictly obey the constitution; refuse to appoint any who do not.
- Appoint cabinet members who will work to dismantle and de-fund their respective departments.
- End military conflicts and order troops to come home.
- Close foreign military bases.
- Appoint efficiency experts to expose and root out government waste.
- Pardon and commute sentences of non-violent prisoners convicted for victimless crimes

Never expand Big Government

A proposal that in any way expands government authority, regulations, taxation, spending, assets or debt is not a Libertarian solution. It is antithetical to the Libertarian Party's mission of small, constitutional government.

Proposing to expand government as a Libertarian leaves you vulnerable to attack by your opponents who will call you hypocritical. They will drive away your supporters and votes by putting a spotlight on your plan to expand government.

You will *help* your Big Government opponents if you propose, suggest or concede that expanding government is a good thing– even if you offset it with a reduction in government. They and their media allies may latch onto your proposal for more government and give it legs – while ignoring the part that reduces government.

Rather than help politicians expand government, make them fight for it. Force them to scratch and claw for every government expansion they pass and to cash in whatever

goodwill they have with voters. Don't take them off the hook by paving the way for more Big Government.

There is never a need or justification for expanding today's gargantuan, oversized governments – federal, state or local.

If a town needs a new streetlight or road, take it out of the existing budget. If someone tries to claim the funds aren't there, challenge them to open up the government's books so you and other citizens can find waste, unneeded programs, and lower priority spending that can be cut instead.

Don't let opponents pick your issues

Just because an issue is in the news in your area, that doesn't mean most voters are aware of it, care about it, or will vote on the issue.

News editors are usually pushing a Big Government agenda. They are liberty adversaries. Don't follow their lead.

Same goes for issues raised by your opponents, by Special Interests who push their issues through candidate surveys, and by the League of Women Voters, which has shown a distinct bias in favor of Big Government. The issues they want to talk about are ones that will keep Big Government big. They are *not* Libertarian.

Step outside the box instead. Lead with Libertarian proposals that *downsize* government and give voters big benefits. Often voters will find them refreshing and far more attractive than anything your opponents are pedaling.

Pick Libertarian solutions that sell

To ensure your solutions are ones voters want and care about, pick ones that:

1. Yield sizable, attractive benefits to voters.
2. Are simple and can be summed up in a sound bite
3. Have broad appeal

Critical Job # 2: Pick Libertarian proposals that yield big *benefits*

The most critical element of a Libertarian Solution is its *benefits*.

A benefit is a positive outcome that will result if your solution is implemented – *from the voters' points of view*, not from a *Libertarian's* point of view.

Put yourself in their shoes. Ask yourself, “What’s in it for voters?” Spell out the benefits – *to them* - loud and clear.

For example, the main benefit of a tax cut is it puts money back into voters’ pockets.

To help voters see why your solution will make things better, spell out the benefits in detail to help them visualize how your solution would play out in their own lives.

“More money in your family budget means more money to pay your bills, pay off credit cards and student loans, replace your old jalopy with a new car, put away money for your retirement, take the family on a vacation, or donate to your favorite charity.”

Quantify your answer wherever possible. For example, say you're proposing to cut a government budget by \$50 million, which is one quarter of the budget, and to cut property taxes by the same amount. If there are 25,000 taxpayers in the jurisdiction, you would say, “cutting the property tax by 25% would give back, on average, \$2,000 to each of 25,000 taxpayers in our county – every year.”

Note that a benefit to a voter includes benefits to others they care about: their families, loved ones, neighbors, co-workers, community, and the world at large. Our opponents frequently appeal to people’s natural concern for the well-being of others. You should too, pointing out that Libertarian solutions actually help them (whereas Big Government solutions often *hurt* them).

Feature these benefits in virtually all your campaign communications and at every opportunity. It will make your campaign more memorable and motivate voters to go to the polls and vote for you. It will also attract and inspire campaign donors and volunteers.

How to identify benefits

Libertarians are often stumped when it comes to identifying the benefits of a Libertarian solution simply because they've never thought it through.

All it takes is a bit of reverse engineering. Whatever government makes worse, shrinking it and expanding liberty will make better.

For example, if the War on Drugs increases crime, then ending the War on Drugs will allow crime to go down.

Now expand on the benefit in positive terms. For example, "Ending the War on Drugs will allow crime to go down, *making our communities safe.*"

More examples:

- Because foreign meddling increases the risk of a terrorist attack, "A non-interventionist policy will reduce the risk of terrorist attacks and make our country safer."
- Because regulations drive up the cost of doing business and force small businesses to lay off employees, "Removing government regulations will drive down the cost of doing business and allow small businesses to hire. This will create desperately needed new jobs."
- Because deficit spending and inflation devalues the dollar and raises the cost of living, "Balancing the budget and ending inflation will sustain the dollar's value and the cost of living, making retirement more secure for seniors."

For each of your Libertarian solutions, brainstorm all the ways in which government is now causing damage. Then for each of these harmful outcomes, derive the benefit(s) that removing or reducing government will enable and put them in positive terms that appeal to the concerns of everyday voters.

There's no shortage of Libertarian solutions for all levels of government that offer big benefits.

Benefits change minds

Articulating benefits can change the minds of people who may initially reject your Libertarian solution.

Most voters are not walking around hoping that politicians will legalize drugs. Even if they agree that the drug war has failed, they're more likely concerned about the damage

that drugs cause. They may have bought into drug warrior propaganda that “we must keep drugs illegal” to “send the right message to kids.”

To convince these voters that we should end the drug prohibition, show them how doing so will improve *their* lives and those of *the people they care about*.

Here are some benefits of ending the drug war - for voters and the people they care about:

- Black markets will dry up, ending street violence – which will make your neighborhood safer.
- Innocent children will be spared the risk of being caught in the cross-fire of gang warfare.
- Addicts will no longer break into houses or mug people at ATM machines to buy drugs that are expensive only because they’re illegal. You’ll be safer in your home and in the streets.
- People with cancer, AIDS, glaucoma, migraines, seizures, and other serious disease will be spared the suffering that medical marijuana can alleviate.
- Your children will no longer be at risk of losing their financial aid, being rejected by the college of their choice, or having a criminal record because they got caught with a joint or because they were in the wrong place at the wrong time.
- By ending the War on Drugs, we’ll send kids the right messages:
 - Be personally responsible.
 - Don’t cling to government policies that fail and that make things worse.
 - Don’t be hypocritical by outlawing marijuana while drinking alcohol.
 - Uphold justice. Don’t lock up people who have harmed no one else. Let them go home to their families and rebuild their lives.

Bold Libertarian solutions yield the biggest benefits

As you do the above exercise, you will notice that *bold* Libertarian solutions yield the biggest benefits, which makes them more attractive to voters and easier to sell.

Ending the drug prohibition will end all gang-related violence, allow substantial cuts in government spending, and reunite non-violent offenders with their families. Ending just the marijuana prohibition will provide these benefits, but to a lesser degree.

Ending the income tax puts twice as much money in voters’ pockets as cutting it in half. Cutting it by only five or ten percent usually doesn’t amount to a lot of money back in voters’ pockets and is therefore much harder to sell.

To inspire and motivate voters who want less government and more freedom, pick bold Libertarian solutions that give them more of what they want.

If no benefits, pick another Libertarian solution

You may find that some of your Libertarian solutions do not yield any appreciable benefits. Such solutions will not inspire voters.

To run a high-impact, game-changing Libertarian campaign, replace them with proposals that would have a significant, positive impact on voters' lives.

Pick solutions that are easy to explain: *simple and familiar*

As a candidate, you have very little time to lay out your proposals to voters. You must be able to pitch your solution in just *ten or twenty-second sound bites* for it to be viable.

Therefore, pick Libertarian Solutions which are easy to explain:

- They must be simple.
- They must address subjects that are familiar to voters so that they need no explanation.
- They must yield *direct* benefits that are easy to explain.

If the explanation for your solution resembles a Rube Goldberg contraption, voters will stop listening to you. If they can't even understand your proposal, they certainly won't be able to grasp how it could make their life better. Pick a new solution to run on.

Your sales pitch for your Libertarian solution should be simple and straightforward enough that a reasonably intelligent 12-year old can understand it.

Voters are not stupid. They just don't have the time or interest in complex, indirect, geeky explanations that rely on an understanding of Austrian economics. You won't reach them unless you make your solution immediately understandable.

So keep it simple!

Examples of LP solutions that can be conveyed in sound bites

"If elected, I will propose legislation to:

- "Cut the property tax in half. You and your family will get back \$1,225 dollars every year.
- "End the income tax and give you back \$3,000 dollars, on average, every year to spend, save or give away as you see fit.
- "End the sales tax and bring 22,000 new jobs to our state.

- “Cut the property tax by 50% so you can afford to stay in our beautiful town and never have to move.
- “End the War on Drugs and make our streets safe
- “Bring our troops home from foreign military bases and allow them to return to their families. Let their kids grow up with mom and dad at home.
- “De-fund and repeal Obamacare and every other law that drives up the cost or lowers the quality of health care. Make both insurance and out-of-pocket medical expenses easily affordable.
- “Repeal the Patriot Act and NDAA. No more spying on Americans!
- “Stop discrimination: Repeal laws against marriage between consenting adults.
- “De-fund and close the Department of Education; return control of schools to teachers, parents and local communities for better quality education at a fraction of today’s cost.
- “Create jobs for the poor by repealing the price-fixing scheme known as ‘minimum wage.’ Stop forcing small business owners to work 80-hour weeks by prohibiting them from hiring help that they can afford.”

Pick solutions with broad appeal

Pick solutions with broad appeal to attract as many voters as possible.

This is easier than ever today. Most voters are more aligned with Libertarians than either Democrats or Republicans.

Majorities or near-majorities today:

- Favor broad-based tax cuts, especially cutting property, income or sales taxes
- Think government is too big and favor cutting government spending
- Want to end the prohibition on medical marijuana or even recreational marijuana
- Know the War on Drugs is a failure and are more open to ending it than prior generations were
- Want less foreign meddling
- Oppose Obamacare
- Oppose mass surveillance
- Approve of or tolerate the right of self-defense and gun ownership.
- Support marriage equality.

These views are even more predominant among the majority of Americans who don’t currently vote – and whom we need to attract to the polls.

Most of these views are also strongly favored by younger voters who are driving up Libertarian vote totals and who will grow the libertarian movement in the future.

Quantify the breadth of your proposal's appeal

For some solutions, you can calculate how many voters are likely to care about your proposal because they directly benefit.

For example, a residential property tax cut may directly benefit the 60% of the voters who are homeowners in your district. Another 30% would benefit indirectly when the savings from lower property taxes are passed down in the form of lower rent. The 10% of voters who get free housing would get no direct benefit.

The homeowners in your district are therefore the only group that directly benefits. But if 95% of the people who turn out at the polls are homeowners, your proposal to cut the property tax directly benefits almost all of them and has *very* broad appeal.

In contrast, a bill to restrict eminent domain may directly benefit less than .1% of voters since only a handful of them are likely to face a taking by eminent domain. Furthermore, many voters don't even know what the term *eminent domain* means, and you won't have time to explain it to them.

Perhaps another ten percent of voters understand the importance of restricting the government's overuse of eminent domain, such as those who followed the US Supreme Court *Kelo v. City of New London* decision. But that's still a small constituency.

Therefore cutting back eminent domain is usually not a good choice for maximum impact.

Test your proposal's appeal on voters

Since most Libertarian campaigns do not have sufficient resources for professional polling, do what you can to seek, listen to, and consider voters' reactions to your proposals. Run them by random voters -- in your target market (i.e. who are open to or lean in favor of your libertarian candidacy) -- to see which ones resonate. Ask them to tell you which ones they consider most important and which are least important.

Explain to them the benefits they would get from your solution. Then ask them how important these benefits are *to them*.

If their reaction is lukewarm, either the benefit isn't compelling to *them* (and therefore not a real benefit), or you neglected to mention a benefit. Or maybe your solution doesn't offer any tangible, direct benefits to voters.

If your solution fails this test, go back to the drawing board and come up with a new one.

Make it bold, but defensible

Some Libertarian proposals would be great to implement but very hard to sell because they would provoke insurmountable objections in your target market: libertarians and those who are open to or lean libertarian.

For each of your Libertarian solutions, make a list of every plausible objection you can think of that your opponents could use to attack it. Ask others on your campaign team and everyday voters to see what objections they come up with.

Write a rebuttal to each objection. If you can't state your rebuttal in a sentence or two, you won't have time to defend it. Consider picking a different Libertarian Solution.

Test your rebuttal. Ask voters if it satisfies their concerns. If not, consider picking a different Libertarian Solution.

Important: many of the voters *who will not vote for you anyway* will strenuously object to your proposals, and won't be swayed by your rebuttals. So be sure to test them *only* on your target market, i.e. those who would seriously consider voting for you.

Offer only what you can deliver

Pick solutions that you will have the authority to act on if elected. Don't run for state legislature on a proposal to close U.S. military bases abroad. Someone may discredit you as non-serious or uninformed. Do research so you're fully aware of the office's authority.

Some functions of government that Libertarians want to downsize or eliminate involve both federal and local government, or state and local government. For example, phasing out or abolishing Obamacare, which is a joint state-federal program, requires policy changes within both levels government.

To run on this issue for a state office, find actions you can take within your authority towards this goal. For example, repealing insurance regulations to make it affordable, opting out of Medicaid, nullifying Obamacare, or removing licensing laws to make health care affordable. If you're running for federal office, propose to repeal and defund the program while providing an explanation for how states can adapt to your proposal and people who are dependent on the program will have better alternatives (e.g. charitable clinics, lower insurance premiums, low-cost health care across the board).

Too many solutions equals none remembered

Some candidates try to promote five, ten or more Libertarian solutions in their campaigns. But the more issues you talk about, the less memorable each one becomes.

If you want voters to remember you, and to remember to *vote* for you, feature no more than one, two, or three of your most compelling proposals in your campaign.

Make one of them your signature proposal for voters to remember you by or have a single theme that they all hang around.

Repeat your key Libertarian solution(s) and their benefits constantly so voters associate you with your solutions and their benefits – not with whatever negative association your opponents or the media want to slap on you.

This creates a *brand* identity for your campaign that is positive and persuasive.

For example:

- “Roberts is the only guy who’ll let us keep our guns.”
- “Delhomme is the woman who will end the state income tax and give me back \$2,500 every year.”
- “Sarvis is the guy who will get the government’s nose out of my emails and phone calls and delete them from their database.”
- “Bedwell’s for peace and bringing the troops home.”
- “Randolph will let my grandmother get medical marijuana for her glaucoma.”

You can mention other Libertarian solutions if necessary in an Issues section of your website. But any mention of them risks pulling you off-message. So keep them brief, and if possible, tie them into a consistent theme.

Remember: there’s no law that says you must take a position on every issue. Your message will be most memorable if voters have to remember only one.

Now sell it!

Once you have some prospective Libertarian solutions to run on that:

- substantially shrink government,
- distinguish you from your opponents,
- are easy to explain,
- will not be discredited by objections you can't defend, and
- provide attractive benefits to a broad base of voters,

then it's time to formulate your sales pitch.

Essential elements of your sales pitch

The format of a pitch for a Libertarians solution is similar to what you see in a commercial for a product or service: problem, solution, benefits, call to action.

You also need to *contrast* yourself with your competition and, when necessary, preempt objections to your solution.

Use this format to quickly make the case for your Libertarian solution:

1. The Bad News (problem): Describe the problem caused by Big Government. Expand on the damage it does. Draw a sharp contrast between you and your opponents by pointing fingers at their proposals and past votes. Accuse them of causing the problem. (They did!)

For example:

“My Democrat opponent voted for Obamacare and my Republican opponent refuses to defund the program. He wants to ‘repeal and replace’ it with a Republican version of the same thing, like Romneycare.

“But Obamacare is a disaster. It drives up the cost of premiums and co-pays, causes people to be dropped by their insurance companies, and forces them to give up their long-trusted family physician. Insurance companies are rationing and denying coverage of those who are supposedly 'insured'.”

2. The Good News (solution): Describe your specific Libertarian solution. State how you propose to *shrink* Big Government in order to remove or reduce the damage it's causing and what specific *actions* you will take if elected.

For example:

“As your US Senator, I will sponsor legislation to repeal and defund Obamacare along with every other federal law that drives up the cost of health care, drives up insurance premiums, or tells you which health treatments or which doctors you must use or that you may not use.”

3. **The Benefits:** This should be the longest part of your pitch. Include lots of compelling, attractive, high-impact benefits with broad appeal. Show how this measure will make voters freer, safer, more prosperous, better educated, and/or healthier. Why we'll have more peace, more justice, more harmony and/or more opportunity. How voters' lives will be substantially better than they are today.

For example:

“There will be unimaginable innovation in health care, just as we saw with the Internet and its many breakthrough innovations such as Uber, Amazon.com, online banking, and Skype. Abundant new health care innovations and technology will give you many more health care options, more convenience, better quality, and much lower costs than today. Medical diagnosis and treatments will become easily affordable. You and everyone you know will be healthier and get relief from disease and discomfort that is not available today.

“Repealing dysfunctional, centrally-planned health care bureaucracies also means we can end the federal income tax, giving you and your family back thousands of dollars every year which you can spend, save or give away as you see fit.”

4. **The Call to Action:**

For example:

“Please vote for me on November 4th. Go to my website (give URL) and learn how you can get involved in our campaign for health.”

If you find there are common objections to your proposal that voters care about, preempt them with rebuttals before going into your benefits (between steps 2 and 3 above).

Note that as a candidate, you are not a lawyer or scientist. You don't have time to prove your case – don't try.

Voters who are open to your idea may buy it. Some will; others will not. So just make assertions (as do your opponents), sticking to the above format. Aside from a few pieces of compelling data, that's all the information you really need, or have time, to convey on the campaign trail.

Boil it down to sound bites

The above example is 271 words, or about 1:48 minutes in duration. This is the long version. Most of the time, you will have much less time to talk.

Boil down your Libertarian Solution to several short, concise statements of varying lengths that are clear and compelling and that include its key benefits whenever possible:

- a 60-second (or less) ad
- a sound bite (10-20 seconds)
- a bumper sticker, tag line, or slogan (5 seconds or less).

Example: End Obamacare

Here are some shorter versions of the above Libertarian solution to end Obamacare that fit in an ad or short sales pitch, a sound bite, a slogan or a bumper sticker:

122 words/ 48 seconds:

Both (Democratic opponent's name) and (Republican opponent's name) voted to fund and sustain Obamacare, which is a disaster. It drives up the cost of insurance premiums, causes people to be dropped from their insurance plans, and forces them to give up their doctors.

As your US Senator, I will sponsor legislation to repeal and defund Obamacare along with every other federal law that drives up your health care costs or denies you the treatment you choose.

You will be able to afford all the high-quality health care your family needs - easily. You'll be in control of your health care decisions. Less government means we can cut your taxes too.

I'm John Buchanan. Please vote for me on November 4th. Learn more at (campaign URL)."

46 words/ 16 seconds:

"My opponents are driving up your health care costs and restricting your choice of insurance plans and doctors.

"I will end Obamacare and put you in charge so you get the high-quality health care your family needs – that's easily affordably.

"Vote John Buchanan for US Senate."

14 words/ 5 seconds:

Vote John Buchanan for high quality, low-cost health care that puts *you* in charge.

6 words/ bumper sticker:

Quality, low-cost health care

Buchanan

US Senate

3 words/ bumper sticker:

End Obamacare

Buchanan

US Senate

Example: Cut Property Taxes 25%

141 words / 57 seconds:

Senior citizens and low-to-middle income families in our town are being squeezed by high property taxes. They can't afford to live here - and they can't afford to sell their homes.

If elected, I will sponsor a bill to cut all residential property taxes by 25% my first year in office and cut \$4.9 million in waste and pork from the budget. Not a single needed government service will be affected.

Over 4,500 families in our town will get back an average of \$1,225 every year. This will save families who are on the brink of foreclosure from losing their homes and will put more money back into your family budget that you can use to pay your utilities, make needed repairs to your home, or save for your retirement."

Please vote for me, Tyler Smith, for City Council on Tuesday.

46 words / 20 seconds:

Property taxes are way too high in (name of town). I will cut all residential property taxes 25% next year and remove \$4.9 million in government waste. Every family will get back an average of \$1,225 every year. (name of town) will be affordable. Vote Tyler Smith for City Council.

16 words / 6 seconds:

Cut property taxes and get back \$1,225. Tyler Smith for City Council

7 words / bumper sticker:

Get back \$1,225
Tyler Smith
City Council

Example: Repeal Prohibition on Medical Marijuana

147 words / 59 seconds

More than 9,000 people in our state currently suffer from the painful and debilitating effects of cancer, AIDS, glaucoma, migraines seizures, and other disease which can be safely treated with medical marijuana.

We must immediately end this unnecessary and inhumane suffering. As governor, I will work to end the prohibition. If federal regulators try to arrest non-violent users of medical marijuana in our state, I will tell them they are not welcome to do business here and deny them use of our jails and prisons. They will get no cooperation from us.

You never know when a life-threatening disease will strike someone you love. Ending the prohibition on medical marijuana will allow those who suffer to get relief from their pain and discomfort with dignity and give them their best chance to live a comfortable, healthy and happy life.

Please vote for me, Robert Sarvis on November 4th.

64 words / 21 seconds:

As governor, I will end the medical marijuana prohibition. I will forbid federal regulators from arresting non-violent users of medical marijuana in our state.

This will allow those who suffer from cancer, AIDS, glaucoma, migraines, seizures, and other disease to get relief from their pain and discomfort with dignity and give them their best chance for a comfortable, healthy life.

Vote Robert Sarvis November 4th.

14 words / 5 seconds:

End the medical marijuana prohibition and stop unnecessary suffering. Vote Robert Sarvis for governor.

4 words / bumper sticker:

End Suffering
Sarvis
Governor

4 words / bumper sticker:

End Prohibition
Sarvis
Governor

Make your presentations cry and sing

Everyone selling a product or service, or running a campaign, needs to craft their words carefully to persuade their prospects to buy, or to vote – including you.

Democratic and Republican politicians put a great deal of effort into preparing every word they deliver. Plus, they have other advantages – media coverage, debates – to help them promote their offerings where you may not.

To compete with them, you need more than just bold, attractive, and compelling Libertarian Solutions. You also need to present them as persuasively as possible.

Build your brand: Stay on message

Staying on-message is critical so voters associate you with your Libertarian solution(s) and its benefits *to them* when it comes time to vote.

Your biggest challenge to staying on message will happen in interviews, forums and debates where others are asking you questions that you cannot directly control.

Reporters, radio and TV hosts, debate moderators, and others who cover your campaign will not necessarily give you the opportunity to reel off your campaign pitch.

Rather they will present questions that promote their agenda, which is usually the opposite of yours: Big Government. Their questions will pull you off message – unless you prepare yourself by:

1. Anticipating and preparing responses to questions they may ask
2. Learning to redirect conversations to your Libertarian solutions.

Prepare responses to interview questions

If you do not adequately prepare for interviews and debates, you could do more damage than good to your campaign, to your vote totals, and to the image of the Libertarian Party.

If you *do* prepare, you will have a far stronger and more memorable impact on every voter you reach.

Create a list of every possible interview question you can think of that someone might ask you.

Start with the list in *Appendix I Answers to Common Interview Questions* of this guide. Then brainstorm with your campaign team to add issues that you hear being talked about in your race.

Be sure to include questions on topics that you're afraid of being asked, which may include:

- subject matters you know little about and are unprepared to talk about in depth
- skeletons in your closet
- being outed if you're gay or lesbian when you prefer to keep your sexual orientation private
- a history of a business you ran that "failed"
- a health problem
- being too young, too old, or too inexperienced; lacking qualifications to serve in office that could be viewed as weaknesses
- having said something that's on record which can be used to discredit you

After you prepare an exhaustive list of possible interview questions, prepare at least one response to every question. Brainstorm with your campaign team to come up with ideas.

Notice the word "response" rather than "answer." You do *not* have to answer every question.

Your response will usually include a redirect, or segueway, back to your agenda, i.e., to get back "on message."

See Appendix II for a list of redirects you can use.

Bring a checklist to every speech and interview

It's very easy to forget to convey key information, such as your website address and benefits.

Create a checklist of points to cover in any presentation. Then be sure to fit them into the discussion as early as possible (so you don't forget or lose the opportunity).

At a minimum, always mention:

1. the pitch for your Libertarian solution(s)
2. the *benefits* of each solution
3. call to action. This can include:
 - a. please vote for me
 - b. sign my petition
 - c. visit my website or Facebook page – give the URL
 - d. get yard signs or bumper stickers
 - e. volunteer for my campaign
 - f. donate

Other items you may want to make a point to include:

1. Important upcoming events to plug

2. Endorsements, poll numbers, media appearances or anything else that credentials your campaign
3. Plug of other Libertarian candidates on the ballot in your area
4. Plug of the LP, including state and local affiliates

Know what you're walking into

When you're invited to do an interview or appear in a forum or debate, ask the host/moderator what particular questions they will ask. They'll often tell you. If they don't, brainstorm to try to anticipate what they are likely to ask.

Then come up with responses for each question.

For example, say you're running for governor on ending the state income tax. If you're asked to speak about a new highway project that you oppose, and which is off-message for your campaign, you might say:

“My opponents voted for this project to give away jobs to their special interest pals. It was not needed now and is not worth the money or congestion it will cause.

“As your governor, I will veto pork barrel projects like this and work tirelessly to cut total government spending by 25% so we can end the state income tax. You'll get back an average of \$2,225 every year that you can save, spend or give away as you see fit. And you won't have to sit in traffic, cutting into your work day for months on end. More money and more free time for you.”

Practice

Speaking in sound bites is not natural to most people. Nor is taking media questions and redirecting them to your agenda, giving speeches, or debating. These are all skills that you can develop -- with practice.

Practice delivering your pitch for your Libertarian solution(s) as many times as you can until they roll off your tongue. Be ready to deliver them on call.

The more you practice, the better your delivery.

If you have a campaign stump speech, practice it in front of a mirror. Repeat until you stop feeling silly and get in the groove. Listen for the best places to pause, slow down or speed up, raise and lower your volume, and other ways to make you more expressive.

Practice your opening line so you can reel it off without looking at your notes.

Practice taking interview questions and *staying on message* with supporters or campaign team members. Use the sample redirects in Appendix II of this guide to practice redirecting questions and staying on message.

Your goal in every appearance should be to stay on message 100% of the time. If you manage to do so 90% of the time, you're doing great. If you're on message only 30% of the time, you have wasted valuable air time. You're letting Big Government control the agenda.

Play the game *Who's Driving?* to practice staying on message. It is designed to train candidates and spokespersons to control interviews, stay on message, and drive home the benefits of your Libertarian solutions.

If no sessions of *Who's Driving?* are scheduled in your area, look for games being played online. Or arrange to play the game with other candidates and campaign supporters in your area.

For instructions and materials needed to play *Who's Driving?* visit:
<https://www.lp.org/whos-driving>.

The World's Best Coach: recordings of you

Watching or listening to recordings of your speeches, interviews and debates is the fastest, best way to improve your presentation.

Whenever possible, record, get a copy of, or get a link to every speech, radio interview, debate, and TV appearance of you on the campaign trail.

Arrange for this *when you book your appearance*. It will be much harder to get, if not impossible, after the fact.

If someone is booking appearances for you, have them *always* ask where and how to get a recording of your presentation. Many media outlets will send you a link to an archive of your appearance online.

If you can arrange for someone to film your speeches, by all means do.

Listen to or watch every recording at least once, and more often if possible.

Added bonus: Post the best recordings – where you stayed *on message* and expanded on the benefits of your Libertarian solution generously - to your website and Facebook page.

Identify and control your Achilles Heels

Everyone has one or more Achilles Heels that can stand in the way of being effective communicators.

To be the best candidate you can be, find out what your weaknesses are and correct them as much as possible.

Ask you campaign team for their input. Tell them you want honest feedback – and listen to what they have to say.

Don't expect to remake your personality in the short time span of a campaign. Instead, find practical ways to correct or minimize your deficits. Be willing to accept reminders from your campaign team members and volunteers to help you correct bad habits.

For example, if you talk too fast, arrange for a volunteer to signal you to slow down.

If you have trouble remembering what to say, bring as many notes as you need and arrange them so you can find needed information quickly. Bring checklists of points to cover.

If you tend to look at your notes too much, practice your speech and your talking points until they are indelibly imprinted in your memory.

It's fine to say, "I don't know"

Give up the idea that, as a candidate, you must have an answer to every question. You don't!

You can't possibly be prepared for every question that may be asked of you. Experienced politicians get asked questions all the time for which they don't have a response. No big deal. You just need a few techniques for handling questions you can't answer.

It's very acceptable to say, "You know, I haven't put a lot of thought into that question. I'll post a response on my Facebook page by Friday."

Or, "That's an interesting question. But what voters tell me they're most concerned about is high taxes they can't afford." Then lay out your proposal to cut taxes.

See Appendices I and II for more ways to handle unprepared questions.

Be an informed salesperson – not a college professor

As a libertarian spokesperson, it's best if you know the issues you talk about well and have a solid understanding of libertarianism. As time permits, read analyses of

government policy related to your Libertarian solutions, keep up on current events, and get grounded in basic libertarian principles.

However, you do *not* need to be a policy wonk to sell your Libertarian Solutions effectively.

In fact, being well-versed in many libertarian issues can be a liability if you treat your campaign as a lecture series. Resist the temptation to tell the world everything you know. You don't have time, and most voters are not interested. Plus, the more you try to tell them, the less likely they are to remember any of it.

Rather, think of yourself as a traveling salesman. Quickly show voters your wares (Libertarian solution), tell them why it will make their lives better (benefits), then ask them to buy (vote, donate, volunteer, put up a yard sign, etc.).

Show over. On to your next stop.

A few key facts help you sell

Have a few key facts or statistics to back up your sales pitch. Cite your sources if you can do it quickly.

But do *not* go overboard with too many facts and figures. You will bore and turn off voters.

Be sure that any facts you cite are accurate. Otherwise, you will leave yourself vulnerable to attack. Save links to your sources in case you need to refer to them.

Don't make up things you don't know. Instead, say, "I don't know." For more tips on how to respond to interview questions about your proposal, see *Appendix I Answers to Common Interview Questions*.

The two best ways to control your nerves

If your fear of public speaking is getting in your way, it can be a sign that you have too much attention on yourself rather than on your audience, or that you are not sufficiently prepared. This will make public speaking uncomfortable for you and may distract voters from your message.

The two best ways to keep your nerves under control before a presentation are to:

1. Prepare, with a sharp focus on the *benefits* to voters of your Libertarian solutions. This puts attention on voters (where it should be) rather than yourself.

2. Practice until your words flow naturally. This gives you confidence and puts you at ease. You may still stumble, but you will do so less.

By preparing and practicing your presentation, you show respect for your audience, which they'll appreciate, no matter how rough you may be around the edges.

Don't be too concerned if you misspeak, stumble, or show signs of nervousness. You're human, and voters know it. They would be nervous too. They will forgive you for small, and even big, errors.

Sincerity goes a long way, and having a less-than-perfect presentation is a sign that you're an ordinary citizen like them who's there to help them, not to look good or to take advantage of them. This will win you points.

Remember, your campaign is not about you, but about *what you will do for voters if elected*. That's what they come to hear. Make it your job to let them know.

Don't fall for nor reinforce the phony left-right paradigm

Bashing the left is a favorite tactic of the right, and bashing the right is a favorite tactic of the left.

With their abysmal track records in office, politicians on each side have little to offer, so they play the "other guy is worse" game.

If you do the same and criticize only the Democrat or only the Republican, you are helping whichever one you don't criticize. But usually they are *both* guilty of the same sins. The Republican's alleged "tax cut" may be phony or unsubstantial and he likely raised more taxes than he ever cut. The Democrat likely voted for higher military spending, the Patriot Act, or more funding for the drug prohibition. Research your opponents and never concede that one is good on any issue. Remember: They're *freedom frauds*. Don't let them trick you into helping them con voters. Almost invariably they're bad, i.e., they vote for Big Government on *all* issues.

Rather than get sucked into the contrived, phony left-right paradigm, make it your goal to *supplant* this paradigm with a new one: Big Government versus small government.

Always point out that *both* your opponents are Big Government and that you are the only small government choice in the election. Practice "equal opportunity bashing" (politely).

Use the active voice to hold opponents to account

Big Government politicians love to use the passive voice to avoid mentioning who took what actions and to thus to avoid responsibility.

A sentence is in the *active voice* when the subject of the sentence is the actor. It's in the *passive voice* when the subject is what's acted upon, thus avoiding mention of who the actor is.

"Mistakes were made," said Jeb Bush of his brother's 2003 invasion of Iraq.

By wording it this way, Jeb avoids criticizing his brother's action, or even bringing up his brother's name.

Using the active voice, you might say, "President George W. Bush made a mistake by invading Iraq."

Or more to the point, "President Bush and his cohorts drummed up claims of 'weapons of mass destruction' and used them as a pretext for waging war. They invaded Iraq, killed many thousands of innocent people, tore up the country, and created instability that led to the formation of ISIS."

Can you see the dramatic difference between the impact of passive voice versus active voice in these statements?

Do not let your opponents off the hook by using the passive voice. Replace sentences like this:

- "Government spending went up."
- "Government has grown."
- "The dollar has devalued."

with sentences like these:

- "Democratic and Republican politicians doubled government spending over the last twelve years."
- "Governor Mitt Romney proposed and signed into law higher spending and higher taxes each of his four years in office -- without any prompting by Democrats."
- "Democratic and Republican politicians overspend recklessly and print money out of thin air. They're turning your once-valuable dollars into near-worthless coins."

Stay informed of current events

While you don't want to let the news take you off-message, it's good to be informed of what's happening in your district, in the United States, and in the world. Catch the news daily while you're campaigning.

It's even better if you follow the news year-after-year so you have a long view of government policy. This will help you make a powerful case for the dramatic benefits of freedom over Big Government.

But if you don't have time, don't let it stop you. Most voters don't follow the news either. Just be sure you prepare responses to questions as described in this guide. Run them by some veteran activists in your state. They may give you valuable background information that will solidify your grasp of the issues.

Avoid ad hominem

To reinforce the Big Government-small government contrast between you and your opponents, criticize them only for their policies as evidenced by their prior votes in office and what they indicate they'll do if elected.

Avoid ad hominem, i.e., do not demean your opponent on the basis of their personality, beliefs, appearance, or other features unrelated to their use of government force.

If your opponent is embroiled in a scandal, let others battle it out. Weighing in will pull you off message and get you tagged as "negative campaigning." It could also appear hypocritical if your opponent is charged with violating campaign finance laws that Libertarians would repeal, which is often the case.

Off-color jokes, rude remarks or incriminating comments

As a candidate, you're a public figure. If you're in the habit of making rude or demeaning remarks or telling off-color jokes, or saying anything that could be construed as inappropriate for an elected official, stop it – completely and immediately.

Anything you write or say, picked up in an email, on Twitter, Facebook, or YouTube, can bring down your campaign, as well as your reputation. It can happen quickly, or later when you're unprepared to respond, such as in an interview or debate.

So zip it!

How to debunk the "spoiler" argument

If the race between your Democratic and Republican opponents gets tight, expect one of them (usually the Republican) and his/her allies to accuse you of being a "spoiler." They'll claim that your presence in the race will split the vote and hand your other opponent a victory.

To convince voters to reject the "spoiler" argument:

- Give them a compelling reason to vote for you by offering bold, attractive Libertarian solutions with *big benefits* – that inspire and motivate them and that *both* your opponents will oppose. This helps convince voters that neither the Democrat nor Republican should be elected.
- Repeat your solutions constantly until voters start to see that small government is actually possible – and that you’re the one who’ll deliver it. This will help them give up their resignation, give up playing defense, and join you in playing *offense*.
- Study your opponents’ voting records so you can cite how they’ve sold out their constituencies. Accuse your Democratic opponent of selling out civil libertarians by voting for the Patriot Act, the War on Drugs, and foreign interventions. Accuse your Republican opponent of selling out fiscal conservatives by voting for bigger budgets, higher taxes, higher debt, and anti-gun laws.
- Read your opponents’ websites and other literature carefully. Note that they use rhetoric but never promise to shrink government. Call them Big Government and accuse them of making it bigger. Point out that, as a Libertarian, you are the only socially tolerant, pro-peace and fiscally conservative choice on the ballot.
- Let them know that voting for the Democrat or Republican plays into the hands of Big Government. It gives them permission to keep it big and expand it more. The only way voters can change government policy is by voting Libertarian, which is a demand for much less government.

If voters insist they must vote for the Democrat or Republican anyway, ask them how long they’ve been voting that way. If it’s been a long time, ask, “How’s that going for you?”

Then stop talking.

You won’t change everyone’s mind. Most voters get left-bashing or right-bashing punditry pounded into their heads daily. Few Libertarian candidates have the resources to overcome this. But you’ll get them thinking and move them closer to voting Libertarian.

Claiming you will win when you’re a long shot

If it were easy to elect candidates to office *for the purpose of shrinking government and expanding liberty*, someone would have done it a long time ago. But it’s not.

Over the party’s 44-year history, Libertarians have won thousands of local races and a handful of state legislative races. We have not won any statewide races (although we’ve come close) nor any federal races.

This is not surprising when you consider what it takes to win an election in the United States and the advantages our opponents have:

- An estimated 35% of voters who will cast a ballot in 2015-2016 are committed to voting for the Democrat or Republican in a 3-way race. Their votes are out of play, leaving only 65% of the votes up for grabs. To eek out a plurality win, a Libertarian would need to get about 62% of those votes, assuming the Democrat and Republican split the rest evenly. But both the Democrat and Republican, because of other factors cited here, are likely to win the vast majority of the votes that are in play.
- For every dollar your Libertarian campaign spends, your Democratic and Republican opponents will spend \$100 or \$1,000 -- two or three *orders of magnitude* more than you.
- In 2012, those who won U.S. House and U.S. Senate seats spent, on average, \$1.5 million and \$10 million respectively. Most of them were incumbents and had built-in advantages. For a challenger to win, it costs even more.
- The cost of running a winning election climbs every election cycle for offices at all levels of government (over \$12 million for U.S. Senate races in 2014).
- Over 96% of incumbents who ran for reelection to the U.S. House won in 2014. Most of those who lost were defeated by challengers who outspent the incumbent, i.e., they had big bucks.
- Most Libertarian campaign teams have no fundraising experience and no list of prospects to appeal to. Democrats and Republicans have professional fundraisers and have valuable lists of prospects who have donated to prior, similar campaigns. Many also get support from PACs or tax dollar subsidies, both of which come with zero fundraising cost to the candidate.
- If you're in a tight race, Democrats and Republicans and their allies will pull out their tried-and-true trump card: "Don't waste your vote." They will likely convince a lot of voters to "hold their nose" and vote for your opponent – even if they *love* your candidacy.
- The media will not give you the coverage they give the Democrats and Republicans, no matter how much you may deserve it.
- Democrats, Republicans and the media may exclude you from debates.
- Democrats and Republicans have sophisticated get-out-the-vote machines supported by powerful Special Interests that you won't have.
- Ten states still offer straight-ticket voting where voters can just simply check-off "Democrat" or "Republican" to vote for all the party's candidates on the general election ballot. This depresses votes for Libertarians. Alabama, Indiana, Iowa, Kentucky, Michigan, Oklahoma, Pennsylvania, South Carolina, Texas, and Utah still use straight-ticket voting.

Even if you meet and shake the hands of thousands of voters, many more thousands in your district *will never know your name* simply because you lack the media coverage and resources to reach them.

These are the main reasons why hard-working, credible, and articulate Libertarian candidates with a dynamite campaign team can end up with low single-digit vote totals.

(Running on the Democratic or Republican ticket won't help. Party operatives typically crush like bugs any true small-government, libertarian candidates who try to win their party's primary. They never make it to the general election, when most voters are paying attention.)

Does this mean you need to concede that you will not win your election? No. There's always a possibility of winning, so don't rule it out. Just don't make unrealistic claims that will cause you to lose credibility or that will demoralize you and your supporters if your vote totals don't match up.

Redefine “winning”

“Are you running just to ‘send a message’ since you have no real chance of winning?” reporters ask endlessly.

In a world that loves football, basketball, baseball, and other sports, people often confuse “winning” with getting the highest number of points, or votes, and thereby being granted the big prize: a seat in a governing body or in the corner office. The media constantly reinforces this point of view.

As a candidate, you need to enlighten voters as to what “winning” really is in American politics for those who want less government and more freedom.

Rather than claim you will win, predict any particular vote total, or concede that you won't win, here are some things you can say:

- “A Democrat or Republican who ‘wins’ an election is not winning for Americans, for liberty, or for peace. He or she is winning authority and prestige *for themselves and their special interest pals*. They will inevitably use this power to expand Big Government and work against the wants, needs, and ideals of most Americans.

“Winning for the everyday taxpayer is creating a real possibility for less government and more liberty coupled with steadfast opposition to any further growth of government. You can do this by voting Libertarian -- and refusing to vote for more Big Government.”

- “I'm a long shot. But voting for one of the [old, cronyist, Big Government] parties is a sure lose: a guarantee that they will make Big Government bigger.

I'm the only choice for small government, a balanced budget, and liberty in this race. Voting for me advances these important goals.”

- “I may be a dark horse in this election, but times are changing. Young voters are rejecting the fiscally reckless and socially intolerant policies of my opponents. Millennials are becoming a force to reckon with, and they’re voting Libertarian.”
- “That depends on what you call ‘winning.’ If either the Blue Team or the Red Team wins, they will hand out your tax dollars to their special interest pals – while raising your taxes even more. That may be a ‘win’ for a politician’s political career and for those special interests, but it’s a big *lose* for the everyday taxpayer. The only way taxpayers, small businesses, workers and families can truly win is by rejecting candidates for more Big Government and voting Libertarian – for small government. A vote for (*your name*) is a vote to end the income tax and give back \$2,225 on average to every taxpayer in our state, every year.”
- “When you vote for a Big Government Democrat or Republican, you’re giving them permission to grow government, raise your taxes, create more government debt, wage more wars, spy on you without a proper warrant, and deny people with cancer safe access to medical marijuana. When you vote Libertarian, you’re *denying* them permission to do these destructive things and instructing them instead to cut taxes, cut spending, end failed government programs, and bring our troops home.”
- “I’m not in the business of predicting elections because that diminishes the power of voters. Let’s empower them instead by informing them of their choices. I’m running for office to...”

These are hopeful, encouraging statements that are credible and avoid setting an expectation that can’t be met.

Instill confidence in voters by *being* a winner. Do your homework, prepare and *practice* your talking points and sound bites to have the confidence you need to sell your Libertarian proposals boldly and assertively. You will inspire.

The levers of change are in *campaigns*

Here’s the really good news: *Win or lose the election, running as a Libertarian for office can have an extraordinary impact.*

By offering your bold, Libertarian solutions for downsizing government and spelling out their benefits, you’re *changing the game*.

You throw our opponents’ endless calls for more government off their tracks. You make small government *possible*.

You show voters that repealing laws, cutting taxes, ending foreign entanglements, and more freedom will make their lives better.

You wake up and engage apathetic, resigned voters – who are on our side and more open to voting Libertarian.

You get people talking about Libertarian solutions - and taking them seriously.

Your campaign grows the Libertarian Party, drawing in more candidates and supporters, enabling even more success in the future.

You amplify the voice of freedom when people are listening: during general elections.

Change the game: Ask yourself continually, “Who’s driving?”

When you talk about your Libertarian solutions and their benefits to voters, you’re *driving* the conversation. You’re setting an agenda for liberty and for much less government.

But unless you’re a trained, professional salesperson, you will get sucked into questions from voters, interviewers, and debate moderators – and allow them to set the agenda. You will forget to talk about your Libertarian solutions and their benefits, or you’ll hit on them less than you could.

Let me repeat:

***YOU WILL FORGET TO TALK ABOUT YOUR LIBERTARIAN SOLUTIONS,
AND
YOU WILL FORGET TO EXPAND ON THEIR BENEFITS.***

You will especially forget during important interviews when you’re nervous or distracted.

To be a game-changer, you must discipline yourself to advance liberty *at every possible opportunity*. Think of yourself as an infomercial that loops endlessly. Call it evangelizing for liberty.

So make a concerted effort to generously infuse your Libertarian solutions and their *benefits to voters* at every public appearance. In longer media interviews, aim to mention both your solution(s) and their benefits at least once every few minutes so people tuning in for a short period will hear them. Prepare your notes, speeches, and cheat sheets accordingly.

After every interview, speech, debate, and other form of contact with the public, ask your most discerning campaign supporters, “Was I driving?” Did I make my Libertarian solutions for less government the focus of the discussion? Or did I only mention them in passing? Did I forget to mention them altogether? What benefits did I mention – or did I forget to bring them up? Did I leave listeners thinking about – and craving - those benefits?

Aim to make the answer to the last question a resounding “Yes!”

I repeat: *Go into every speaking opportunity with the goal of leaving your listeners thinking about, inspired by, and craving your Libertarian solutions and their benefits.*

Aim to be Ginsu Knife commercial for liberty. Only instead of selling cutlery that slices and dices, you’re selling Libertarian solutions that bring prosperity, justice, human respect, peace, safety, health, opportunity, harmony, financial security, and jobs.

If you want to see the gold standard in Libertarian communications, search online for video and text of the 1996 and 2000 Libertarian for president candidate Harry Browne. He infused benefits into every minute of his presentations.

Remember, our opponents and their allies are driving for more Big Government every hour of every day. To be a game-changer, you need to be driving an agenda for liberty *constantly*. You do that by laying out specific proposals and hammering home their benefits at every opportunity.

You cannot talk about the benefits of liberty too much. Make them your rallying cry.

Appendix I: Responses to common interview questions

The below responses (R) are examples of how a Libertarian running for congress to end the federal income tax can handle common interview questions.

Add to this list any questions you can think of that may be asked during your campaign. Then prepare responses to all of the questions based on the Libertarian solution you're running on.

Notice that you can turn almost any question on its head in your favor. Redirect it to pitch your Libertarian solution and its benefits *at every opportunity*.

Appropriate and/or predictable questions

Q: Why are you running for office?

R: I'm running for congress to end the federal income tax and give back \$11,525, on average, to each taxpayer – every year – that they can spend, save, or give away as they see fit.

Q: Why don't you run as a Republican? (or Democrat?)

R: Big Government Special Interests have co-opted the old parties. Freedom lovers who try to win the nomination of the Democratic or Republican parties usually get defeated in the primaries and never make it to the general election. By running as a Libertarian, I will give all voters a choice to end the income tax and get back an average of \$11,525 – every year - in the general election this November.

Q: What will happen if your proposal is enacted? How would it work?

R: Taxpayers will get back \$11,525 each – every year – that they can spend, save, or give away as they see fit. No more filing taxes. More money in your pocket. We'll have millions of new, private-sector jobs. We'll cut federal spending to the year 1998 when it was \$1.65 trillion – more than enough for a strong military defense, judicial system, and other essential services that Americans want or need.

Q: Why is this your primary issue?

R: Government is too big and taxes are too high. Ending the income tax will take money out of the bloated, wasteful coffers and Big Government and put it back in hands of the people who earned it. They will be much more able make ends meet and take care of their families. It will also create thousands of desperately-needed new jobs in our district.

Q: Where are you campaigning? What groups are you speaking to?

R: I'll be talking about how we can end the income tax to (plug recent and upcoming events.)

Q: How much money will your campaign raise? How much have you raised?

R: We don't have Special Interests backing us who get government largesse, then plow it into the campaign coffers of Big Government politicians. I'm a small government candidate running a grass roots campaigns supported by individuals and small businesses. Every little bit helps. If you would like to donate and help us end the income tax, go to our website...

Q: Will you be doing any advertising?

R: That will depend on how much our grassroots supporters can help us. If you'd like to donate to help end the income tax....

Q: Has / will your campaign done / do any polling?

R: If we do any polling for public consumption, we'll post the results as soon as possible at our website.

(If they persist, just keep repeating this answer. Don't alter your response. They will eventually quit asking.)

Q: Where do you expect to get support? Who will vote for you?

R: Our support will come from everyday workers and taxpayers who desperately need relief from high taxes. The groups who want to keep your taxes high so they can profit from Big Government will oppose us. Follow the money.

Q: Are any groups actively supporting you?

R: Our support comes from everyday workers, taxpayers and small business owners who desperately need relief from high taxes. They know they can spend the \$11,525 they'll get back, on average, from ending the income tax much better than politicians do on a wasteful, bloated Big Government.

Q: Has anyone endorsed you? Do you expect more/any endorsements?

R: Politicians and special interests who want too keep your taxes high so they can profit from Big Government will endorse my opponents. Our support will come from everyday workers, taxpayers and small business owners who desperately need relief from high taxes.

Q: Have you ever served in public office before?

R: No. I work in the private sector and represent everyday taxpayers and workers who need relief from high taxes and need to get government off their backs. I have no experience raising taxes or handing out pork, and as your congressman, I never will. I will work daily to end the income tax and give back \$11,525, on average, to taxpayers across our state.

Q: How will you get anything passed if you're the only Libertarian?

R: I won't help to pass higher taxes, higher government spending, or more burdensome government regulations. I will oppose their passage by voting No. If I'm elected on my proposal to end the income tax, there will be a mandate to get rid of the income tax. Big Government politicians who defy the will of the voters will suffer voter backlash in the

next election. And if I get elected, many more small-government candidates will run for office in the next election to join me.

Q: (If you're asked a question for which you really should have prepared an answer, but didn't)

R: I'll look into that and post my response to your question at my campaign website by Friday. Our website is (URL). While you're there, please sign up to stay abreast of our campaign to end the income tax. We'll let you know how you can help, and where to get bumper stickers and yard signs. You can also print fliers from the website that you can give to your friends, fellow church members, and others you think might be interested.

Introductory distractions

Q: Why are you a Libertarian?

R: I'm a Libertarian because I believe government is too big and taxes are too high. Ending the income tax will...

Q: How did you become a Libertarian?

R: When I realized that taxes are way too high, that both my opponents have voted to *raise* taxes, and that the Libertarian party is the only party dedicating to cutting taxes, the choice was clear. No other party supports my proposal to end the income tax...

Q: What do Libertarians believe about (fill in the blank with something unrelated to proposed Libertarian Solution)?

R: (see Redirects in Appendix II)

Q: What do you do for a living?

R: I'm a real estate agent, and I meet with private sector workers and small business owners every day who are struggling to survive under today's high tax burden, which both my opponents voted for. I'm running for congress to end the income tax...

Q: What do you think about (Rand Paul, some other politician)? Do you support him?

R: He has made some good proposals to shrink government, which the GOP leadership opposes, so he has slim chance of getting any of his good ideas passed. He endorses a lot of Big Government Republicans who gave us Romneycare, high taxes, high government spending, \$17 trillion debt, the Patriot Act, and endless foreign wars. (Plug LP presidential candidate, then plug your own Libertarian solutions).

Q: Where did you go to college?

R: Michigan State. But it wasn't until my first job after college when I started to see how much the federal government is taking in taxes and how the income tax hurts working people and small businesses – which are the primary creators of new jobs. As congressman for the 10th district, I will sponsor legislation to end the income tax...

Big Government assertions

Q: The government is already looking at a budget shortfall. Wouldn't your proposal to cut taxes just make things worse? How would we plug the gap?

R: The real question is: how are families and small businesses supposed to balance their budgets and make ends meet? The answer is: end the income tax.

Politicians run budget deficits because they spend too much. My Democratic and Republican opponents both voted for bigger budgets, and they now propose to raise spending even more.

If elected, I will work to drive down the \$3.9 trillion federal budget to the spending level of 1998, which was \$1.65 trillion. That's still way more than the federal government needs, and leaves too much waste and pork. But it will be a good start, and will allow us to both balance the budget and end the federal income tax, giving back \$11,525 to every taxpayer – every year.

Q: What can we do about unfunded government pension liabilities- the dark cloud hanging over our heads?

R: The more important question is: What are we going to do for the people who were forced to pay Social Security tax all their lives, and who are now dependent on Social Security? Most of them have no savings, yet politicians have been raiding the Social Security trust fund every year, leaving absolutely nothing for the workers who were forced to pay into it all these years. I find it disturbing that you're asking about government worker pensions which are, on average, 80% funded. Why are we even talking about the 20% of government pensions that are unfunded when 100% of the retirement fund for most Americans has no money at all?

Q: (For state candidates cutting taxes or spending:) This would reduce the state's bond rating to junk bond status. Wouldn't that be a disaster?

R: If the state can't borrow money, that's a good thing. We already have too much debt. Politicians must be forced to make ends meet, just as families are forced to do when they can't get a credit card. But that won't even be an issue when we cut spending. We can easily cut enough to balance the budget and end the income tax...

Q: If the state's bond rating gets too low, wouldn't the interest rate on existing debt go up, forcing taxpayers to pay more?

R: That won't happen if we cut spending. If interest rates go up for other reasons, which they may, we can sell off tens of billions of dollars in unneeded government assets -- such as mineral rights, real estate, and inventories -- to pay down the debt. We'd no longer have to make payments on debt, which would allow us to lower the budget and cut taxes even more.

Q: There's very little discretionary spending in the budget.

R: The entire budget is discretionary. The constitution does not mandate any level of spending. Politicians and their Special Interests like to pretend that their gravy trains are untouchable. Not so. Every department needs to be reduced and most need to be

eliminated or phased out altogether. They are bloated, wasteful and unnecessary. Many of them do more harm than good.

If we roll back spending to the year 1998, we'll still have the world's strongest military defense, our judicial system, and other constitutional functions of government. It will allow us to balance the budget and end the income tax, giving back \$11,525 to every taxpayer, every year.

Q: Your proposal would force us to cut emergency services like police and fire – or to close schools.

R: By getting the (federal or state) government out of way and removing mandates that drive up the cost of schools, local governments will be able to cut property taxes, leaving more than enough for essential services such as police and fire.

Q: We need more funds to rebuild our crumbling infrastructure, make our roads safe and stimulate the economy.

R: State and local governments have way more money than they need to maintain roads and keep them safe. If politicians spend those funds on pork barrel projects instead, they should be prosecuted for criminal negligence and found guilty of endangering the public. One way to cut spending is to get the federal government out of the highway business and allow local governments, which are more accountable to the voters who ride on those roads, to control the building and maintenance of roads. The more local, the better. By cutting unneeded spending in this and other areas of the federal government, we can end the income tax...

Q: Every person or group that spends money - including private businesses and households – wastes money, not just government. This is normal and unavoidable.

R: Waste in government is legendary and far worse than in the private sector. When families and businesses spend the money they earn, they're much more careful. But when politicians spend taxpayers' money, they waste it on programs that make things worse or which have no net positive effect. This is why we must cut government spending and end the income tax, give back \$11,525 every year to each taxpaying family, and create millions of desperately needed jobs.

Credibility challenges

Q: No Libertarian has ever received more than 2% of the vote for this office. Is that what you expect you'll get?

R: The great news is that Libertarian vote totals are going up nationwide. In many races where Libertarians were getting 1-2%, they're now getting 3, 4, 5, and 6%. People are sitting up and taking notice. The more people who vote Libertarian, the more we reject the policies of Big Government Democrats and Republicans and the more demand we create for proposals like ending the federal income tax and giving back, on average, \$11,525 every year to each taxpayer.

Q: Since you're not going to win, isn't voting for you a wasted a vote?

R: Voting for Big Government Democrats and Republicans is worse than wasteful – it's damaging and destructive. It gives them license to raise taxes, raise government spending, start more wars, put our troops in harms way, and impose more regulations on struggling small businesses. The only way things will change is if you vote Libertarian which will advance proposals like ending the income tax. This will give back \$11,525, on average, to each American family - every year.

Q: Isn't there a danger that your running will spoil the election for the [Republican/Democrat]?

R: You can't spoil tainted meat. Both my Democrat and Republican opponents will vote for higher taxes, more government debt, higher government spending, more wars, and more government regulations. It will make no difference who wins. The only way you can change things is by voting Libertarian. The more Libertarian votes, the more we advance proposals like ending the income tax. This will give back \$11,525 every year to each American family, on average.

Q: If you had to vote for the D or R, which one would you vote for?

R: Neither. Voting for Big Government politicians makes things worse and gives them license to raise taxes, spending and debt. The only way to turn around Big Government in America is to vote Libertarian.

Q: Do you think you have any chance of winning?

R1: That's up to the voters. And it's also up to the media and whether they will let voters know about all the candidates on the ballot and what we stand for. I'm running to end the income tax...

R2: I'm a long shot in this race, but anything is possible. Polls show more voters disapprove of Democrats and Republican politicians than ever before. More young people are voting, who are more libertarian than ever before. We may see a surge in Libertarian votes this fall that we've never seen before.

R3: That's up to your (reporter's newspaper, TV station, etc) much more than it is up to me. Is (name of media outlet) committed to informing the voters of all of their choices and refraining from biased coverage that gives an unearned advantage to the Democrat and the Republican?

Q: Why is your opponent endorsed by every newspaper in the state – while none have endorsed you?

R: That's a good question. Why don't you ask them why they refuse to endorse the only candidate in this race who will cut taxes, cut spending, and balance the budget -- what most people in our state want?

Q: Why are you running if you have no chance of winning?

R: The voters will decide who wins this race, not you or me. They will have a choice for freedom and less government by voting Libertarian. They will have a chance to deny

Democrats and Republicans permission to raise taxes and keep spending high. The more who vote Libertarian, the more we make small government and ending the income tax possible.

Q: Do you have any experience in government?

R: My opponents have plenty of experience raising taxes, raising government spending, and increasing the nation's debt. I'm going to congress for the opposite purpose: to cut spending, cut debt, and end the income tax.

Q: Do you think voters are ready for a Libertarian? Are you too radical for most people?

R: More voters are aligned with Libertarians who will cut their taxes than with Big Government Democrats and Republicans who recklessly raise their taxes, spy on their emails and phone calls, start unnecessary wars, and create perilous government debt.

Q: Doesn't your proposal go too far?

R: Ending the income tax is a good first start. We'll balance the budget, cut government overspending, and give back \$11,525 to every taxpayer, on average, every year. My opponents have gone way too far with reckless spending and high taxes, putting our entire economy at risk. Vote Libertarian to end the income tax and make government small, accountable and responsible.

Q: Your opponents say this will (allegation of damage). How do you respond?

R: Big Government politicians running our federal government are ruining our schools, making our streets dangerous, killing private sector jobs, driving up prices of food and housing by inflating the dollar, and putting our troops in harm's way. Voting Libertarian will return control of schools to local teachers, parents and communities; enable a surge in new jobs; make our streets safe; stabilize the dollar and bring our troops home to their families.

Q: How will you get Democrats and Republicans to go along with your agenda? How will you build bi-partisan support and get this passed?

R: If they're expanding government, I won't work with them. I will oppose them. The question is, when I propose to cut taxes, will they work with me – or will they shun taxpayers in favor of their Special Interest pals?

Q: Isn't it better for the district to keep our veteran incumbent in the Senate who has a lot of clout than to elect a junior (senator/rep/delegate) who will have far less influence?

R: My Big Government opponent is using his clout to drive up taxes, drive up spending, start new wars, and drive up government debt. We need candidates who are not beholden to Special Interests and who will work for the interest of everyday taxpayers. If elected, I will end the income tax...

Q: Do you own a gun?

R1: The beauty of the right to keep and bear arms is it keeps violent criminals guessing which homes can defend themselves and which ones can't.

R2: I never ask people that question in public, because if they answer 'Yes,' it gives thieves who want to steal guns a target for theft. If they answer 'No,' it signals to murderers and rapists that the person's home is unarmed and defenseless. Which one is your goal in asking me that question?

Questions that are way off-message**Q: How 'bout them Ravens?**

R: I'm glad they're winning. I want to give the people here an even bigger win by ending the income tax. What a winning year that would be for the taxpayers of the tenth district.

Q: Was your neighborhood damaged by the storm last week?

R: No, and I have great sympathy for those who lost their homes. But I'm not going to tell the people of the tenth district that they have to bail out people who build vacation homes on the shore and who refuse to buy insurance to cover any losses. If you can afford to buy a second home, don't make people pay for your insurance who can barely afford their first home. When we end the income tax, we'll end bailouts that are unfair to everyday taxpayers.

Q: What's your view on Ron Paul's tweet about veteran Kyle who was killed by a sniper? Did he go over the line?

R: I've been on the campaign trail for 16 of the last 20 hours and I haven't read that story yet. I'm here today to talk about ending the income tax...

Appendix II: Ways to redirect (segue) the conversation

If interviewers ask you questions that presume we must have more Big Government, that pull you off-message, or that you can't answer, use these lines (or come up with your own) to redirect the conversation to your Libertarian proposal:

- Your question is interesting, but in talking to voters in my district, what I've found is that they're much more concerned about (your proposal and benefits)...
- That's interesting, but I'm running for office in order to (your proposal and benefits)...
- That's interesting, but Rome is burning. The US is at risk of becoming the next Greece or Cyprus. We need to balance the budget (your proposal and benefits)...
- That assumes government must solve this problem. But Big Government *is* the problem. (Government program) is actually making things worse. What we need is a small government solution to (your proposal and benefits)...
- (if they ask multiple questions, pick the one you want to answer) I'll address your last question (your proposal and benefits)...
- (if you're not prepared to answer and/or the question is off-message) I'll have to think about that. What I can tell you now is (your proposal and benefits)...
- I'd like to put some thought into that. (then launch back into your LP solution)
- That's not my top issue and that's not why I'm running for office. I'm running in order to (your proposal and benefits)...
- What [voters / parents / taxpayers / teachers, etc.] tell me is they want (your proposal and benefits)...
- Some people who ask that question want to distract voters from the fact that politicians are overspending, diminishing our freedoms, and making our streets unsafe. What we need to focus on is (your proposal and benefits)...
- (If the interviewer is being particularly biased and unfair) Frankly asking that question misleads voters because (explain why). I'm running for office to undo the damage being done by (area of Big Government) and to give voters a choice for (your proposal and benefits)...
- That's a questions my opponents like to pose because it distracts people from the fact that they want to raise your taxes. I'm running to *cut* taxes (your proposal and benefits)...
- I'm sorry, but that is not the burning question of the day. What voters really want and need to know is (your proposal and benefits)...
- (if they ask how you'll handle some administrative task unrelated to your agenda) I'll appoint qualified people to address and solve that problem. As (office you're running for), my focus will be on (your proposal and benefits) ...