Revamping Poll Worker Training

WHITLEY COUNTY

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INTRODUCTION

Whitley County has used the same methods for poll worker training for many years. In the 2024 Primary Election, I was ill for half of the training sessions. The Clerk and other staff had to fill in, and on Election Day, there were gaps in the training sessions. Poll workers had more questions about setting up and forms than usual and seemed to have trouble setting up their machines and poll pads. This impacts Election Day, as we send more staff out to the locations to assist them in getting everything up and running. It also affects voter confidence if the polling location is not ready to go when they get there to vote. My capstone project is to change our poll worker training style, update our PowerPoint presentation, and create a Poll Worker Quick Guide for workers.

PROJECT GOALS

My goal for this Capstone Project is to revamp, refresh, and change our current training. My project is to redo our PowerPoint presentation, add videos, make a Poll Worker Quick Guide for workers to utilize on election day as a reference, and correlate it with the Poll Worker Training PowerPoint presentation. Also, included in my project is training for our staff so they can feel comfortable taking over training, if necessary.

METHODS

My plan for carrying out this project was in phases. I would have liked to complete it before the 2024 General Election, but I did not have time. However, I was able to use some of the new things from this project for the election. I did not finish the Poll Worker Quick Guide, but I

revised the PowerPoint presentation and added videos with instructions on machines and poll pads.

1. First, I talked with staff about our issues with training in the Primary Election. We discussed how things could be changed to update the training and make it easier on them.

2. Second, we added videos from our vendor to the training PowerPoint to assist with setting up and closing the machines.

3. Third, I worked on the PowerPoint presentation before October and was able to revamp and refresh the information and design.

4. Lastly, I was able to work on a Poll Worker Quick Guide after the General Election. It was helpful to know some of the questions and issues that arose on Election Day to add to the guide.

I have not received feedback from the poll workers yet; however, on Election Day, there were fewer machine and poll pad issues than in the Primary Election. It seemed to be simple issues on Election Day; therefore, I believe my goals were achieved for the 2024 General Election. I would still like to add more tools to the poll worker training to continue solving this problem, complete the Poll Worker Quick Guide, and add videos to our website for Poll Workers to watch before and after training.

I will continue to work on training staff and updating the training documents as the next election comes. The results of this project will be very useful to our County. It will reduce the number of staff needed to answer questions and solve problems that arise on Election Day. If they are less complicated and poll workers know the answers, I will feel that training is more complete. I will send a survey to poll workers after the election to see if they felt like

the training was better and if they felt more prepared. I can then compile this data to decide

what worked and did not work in our new training and update it as necessary.

CEATS PRINCIPLES & TOOLS

The information from the CEATS Principles and Tools I have learned helped me

complete my capstone project. I have used many of them, including but not limited to:

1. Election Management Guidelines & What Would You Do? Scenarios

2. Poll Worker Guidelines, Best Practices & Ethics, and Top Ten Mistakes by Poll
   Workers

3. Election Day Handbook, Chapter 12

4. Standards of Conduct for Election & Registration Officials

They have assisted me in completing my project by giving me information to add to the

Poll Worker Training and the new Poll Worker Quick Guide. In the Election Management

Guidelines & What Would You Do? Scenarios, I heard from other counties about scenarios they

have had and how they were able to solve them. It gave me ideas to add to our Poll Worker

Quick Guide to assist them on Election Day. Using the Poll Worker Guidelines, Best Practices &

Ethics, and Top Ten Mistakes by Poll Workers, I added some of those issues to the new training

and guide. Using the Election Day Handbook tool from Phase II, Session 3, I copied the

information regarding straight party voting & write-in voting to the Poll Worker Quick Guide

since those are questions we receive from Poll Workers on Election Day. Lastly, I adapted a

statement from the Standards of Conduct for Election and Registration Officials to become our

"motto." I would like the staff and poll workers to reference this motto when we are working

with voters: "Election officials should treat all voters, candidates, and other participants in the

political process with respect, identify and correct discriminatory policies or practices, and refrain from activities or associations that promote discrimination."

CONCLUSION

The solution to our problem of poll worker training in Whitley County is to revamp, refresh, and change our current training. My project was to redo our PowerPoint presentation, make a quick information guide for poll workers to utilize on election day as a reference, correlate it with the poll worker training PowerPoint presentation, and train staff so they would feel comfortable taking over training. I have completed these tasks and feel that my capstone project is accomplished; however, I know it will be an ongoing process and will have more data after the next election. I am excited to use all the tools from this project in the next election, and I would love to share my project with other counties so they can adapt the Poll Worker Quick Guide and PowerPoint presentation to their specific county.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

REFERENCES

2024 Election Day Handbook – Indiana Secretary of State

Poll Worker Guidelines, Best Practices & Ethics – Multiple Cohorts, CEATS

Standards of Conduct for Election & Registration Officials – Election Center

Top Ten Mistakes by Poll Workers – Indiana Secretary of State