NDTC BLUE BENCH TRAINING PROGRAM

WHAT IS A BLUE BENCH TRAINING?

NDTC’s Blue Bench Training Program is a day-long, hands-on, intensive learning experience. Trainees practice hard and essential skills; learn from political professionals across digital strategy, field, and fundraising; and build community with local leaders and fellow passionate Democrats during the training day.

Blue Bench Trainings are built for three main audiences:

- Candidates and Potential Candidates
- Campaign Staff (including Volunteer Staff)
- Local Leaders

Trainees are split into these groups at the beginning of the day, and our action-oriented training material is tailored to each audience. Each group follows their own training path so they receive the information and practice most relevant to their needs.

WHAT SKILLS ARE TRAINED?

Each trainee is trained in the following areas crucial to a successful campaign, with content specific for their role:

- Communications
- Digital
- Field
- Fundraising

Below is the list of courses conducted at each training, with a brief description of each.
Candidate Audience:

“Practicing Your Story of Self”: In this communications course, trainees learn how their story of self fits into the greater narrative of how they’ll make a difference in their community by running for office. They practice telling their story of self and discussing how to tailor it story based on the audience.

“Building, Engaging, and Activating Your Community Online”: In this digital session, trainees learn the main components of creating effective digital content. After learning how to build the content that will draw their audience in, they engage with an audience online and practice writing calls to action.

“Identifying and Persuading Voters”: In this field session, trainees learn to calculate their key field numbers (including their vote goals), practice persuasion conversations with voters, and think through strategies to recruit volunteers.

“Raising Money to Fuel Your Campaign”: In this fundraising session, we discuss the importance of mindset when it comes to fundraising. From there, we navigate building, organizing, and prioritizing donor lists to ensure candidates are making the most of their time.

Staff Audience:

“Practicing Your Story of Self”: In this communications training, trainees learn how they and their candidate’s stories of self connect, practice sharing their story of self, and recognize how to tailor their story of self.

“Telling Your Campaign’s Story Online”: This digital training teaches trainees to tell their campaign’s story online, engage with a digital audience, and write effective calls to action for their social media platforms.

“Identifying Voters and Increasing Your Campaign’s Volunteers”: After this field course, trainees understand the roles of staff on a campaign, are able to calculate their campaign’s key field numbers, and have practice making a hard ask to recruit volunteers.

“Raising Money as a Team for Your Campaign”: This fundraising training teaches trainees to recognize the importance of mindset for their team, organize their campaign’s donor list, and develop a fundraising strategy.
Local Leaders:

Note: For Local Leaders, we offer two courses for both communications and field. We work with you to choose the best one for your needs.

- “Leveling Up Your Organization”: In this field course, trainees evaluate components of motivation for members and volunteers, practice giving a volunteer a leadership opportunity, and try backwards mapping for an organizational goal.

- “Increasing Membership in Your Organization”: This field training helps trainees assess how capacity operates in their organization, demonstrates power mapping to connect with community members, and drafts a new member recruitment strategy to meet event goals.

- “Communicating within Your Organization to Meet Goals”: In this communications training, trainees learn how to facilitate an effective meeting, practice delegating tasks, and assess ways to hold their team accountable to its goals.

- “Increasing Engagement with Your Members”: In this communications training, trainees practice an introductory values-based conversation, demonstrate and apply one-on-one conversations, and learn to use additional tools to maintain member relationships.

- “Using Digital Outreach to Engage with Your Organization”: In this digital training, trainees learn effective digital organizing concepts, connect online engagement with in-person organizing, and practice writing a call to action using digital tools.

- “Raising Money for Your Organization”: In this fundraising training, trainees analyze how to rolodex, organize, and prioritize their organization’s donor list, learn components of fundraising events, and practice making a hard ask.


Trainees spend the day learning key skills from leading political campaign experts. They leave with invaluable connections to other Democratic activists in their area and the tools and skills they need to lead change in their communities.