

Make it Happen!

Success guide for Real Democracy Members

The future is here!



Dear New Member of the Real Democracy Party,

Congratulations on joining the only political party that's actually going somewhere! We're the only party that has a clear aim – handing power to the people as soon as we can, via a randomly-selected parliament.

We have several decisive advantages over the “established” parties. They lack the key requirements for an effective organisation – a clear purpose and the ability to communicate that purpose honestly and clearly to the members. We aren't burdened by baggage of history and bureaucracy, or conflicts over what to think of all manner of special issues. And not least we have the powers of truth, justice and reality on our side.

We value you for being a member. But if you'd like to be more involved with the Real Democracy project we'd very much appreciate it. Perhaps you have money or other resources to spare? Or perhaps you'd like to get involved in spreading the word and recruiting more members. Getting more members is what this guide is about.

We have a unique system for getting our good news to the people. We use viral marketing – people telling other people, who then tell others and so on. It has been used with great success for selling *things* to people. But we are using it for passing on information instead. We aren't concerned that the dinosaur parties might steal this wizard idea from us – they are welcome to try, but come off it, how many people could you ever get to join Labour or the Conservatives? By contrast most people are already crying out for what we offer!

Now see how powerful the viral marketing principle can be

Suppose you recruit just nine people a month – which you can do easily – and they then recruit nine people themselves, and so on.

After 1 month 10 members
After 2 months 100 members
After 4 months 10,000 members
After 7 months 10,000,000 members
That's TEN MILLION members!

(and that's only the members whom YOU have helped to recruit!)

Well, it would be good to get ten million members within seven months, but if it took us even *seventy* months we would hardly be a great failure, would we?

To learn about how *You* can help with making this happen, you can either join in with one of our groups, or get your sponsor to help you, or study the basics with this guide, or even do all of these if you wish.

By getting involved you can win recognition rewards, or instead maybe you wish no more than to experience the satisfaction of a valuable job well done.

Looking forward to a productive relationship,

Sally James,
Membership Committee
Real Democracy Party

Part 1. The basic (rather simplistic) script

There are various ways of spreading the word. The easiest but least gratifying is simply distributing our *The Basics of the RDP* along with the joining forms, to people or places as judged appropriate. Or you could distribute the preview of *The Future is Here!*. The downside of that approach is that it doesn't build much sense of teamship, community, recognised involvement. And it doesn't give much feedback.

So we'll concentrate here on the most basic and generally most powerful method. That's simply talking to people, whether they be friends, associates, or strangers.

Imagine the scene. Perhaps you are with an associate at work. Or in the pedestrianised High Street accompanied by a friend — or helping to run a stall in that High Street — when a potential recruit draws near.

You ask something like: "Excuse me, do you think politics is boring or politics is interesting?" At which they reply:

"..... .."

And then you continue: "..... ?".

Eh? Well, I guess that you will have realised that before you ask that first question you have to know what you are going to say next, depending on what the answer is that you get back. And what you say after that, and so on. Don't worry, this won't be as impossible as you might think. It's a bit like learning a foreign language or learning a new school subject, but in this case there's far less to be learnt, and at worst you can always cheat by falling back on the crib-book!

Unlike a game of chess, you can have all the moves that matter planned out in advance.

Key principles for getting your message across

There are a lot of people out there, and it doesn't matter if some of them don't go along the way you would like them to. Let them be, and move on to other prospects! But you still should do things in a way that minimises the chances of failures.

The first principle is to proceed as far as possible by asking questions. This gives a much more balanced interaction than if you just start giving a lecture such as: “Hello, I’m telling people about the Real Democracy Party....We believe the political system needs changing....Mass elections don’t work properly....We advocate random selection instead....The system will work by selecting 500 people at random and inviting them to become MPs etc.”

The problem is that while you are saying all that you aren’t getting any wiser about what the listener thinks of it all, you aren’t establishing any sort of interactive relationship with them, and the listener may even think you are rather a bore! And most importantly, people tend not to be persuaded by just having stuff lectured at them, but are much more persuadable by key questions which challenge them to think what the true answer might be. *Questions!*

Also very important is to avoid leading them to express allegiance to some party or principle that is in conflict with realdem. For instance, you could unwisely ask a prospect:

“Are you a supporter of a political party?”

At which the prospect says perhaps: “Yes, I’m a Tory. I think Cameron is the greatest leader we’ve had since Churchill.”

And with that your chat-up has run into a problem. You could in all probability come up with a whole load of reasons why he should not be a supporter of the Tory party. But even so, you would be in the difficult position of trying to demolish that person’s existing beliefs and loyalties. You would be “criticising him”, and people have a strong tendency to close up against such criticism. A similar question to avoid is “What do you think about politics?”.... (“I think Labour are great and all the rest are trash!”) So be sure to avoid “What do you” and “Are you”.

The sort of questions you need are those which call for a yes/no answer, which are called closed questions or leading questions. Careers interviewers, therapists and so on often choose open questions which encourage more elaborate answers. But those are exactly what you need to avoid here. Your purpose is not to discover what the person has already thought, but rather to lead them on to sounder thinking, by means of questions which they have never thought about before. And a few facts, but the questions are the more powerful, because you cannot disprove or disbelieve a question.

The first moves of our “chess-game”

In most situations the best opening question is probably the one we began with above: “Excuse me, may I (/we) ask whether you think politics is interesting or you think politics is boring?”. If you feel more comfortable with a different wording, use that instead. You aren’t acting a play. (Just be very sure to steer clear of those vague “what do you think of our political system?” queries.)

Let’s suppose they say they think politics is boring. Then ask: “And do you think it doesn’t make any difference to your life?” Let’s suppose they continue to express a lack of enthusiasm about talking about politics. Then ask them what job do they do (what’s their occupation), or do they pay tax, or drive a car, or have children, or whatever. You can rest assured that one way or another you can show them how politics *could* make a difference to them. “Do you have a job paid for by government?” “Do you work in a small business which may get inadequate support from government? Or a big business subsidised by the government?” “Do you have children who could be affected by education policies?” “Do dangerous roads, or motoring taxes matter to you?”

With a little imagination and enthusiasm to think about such things, you should be able to persuade most “bored” people that they really should be interested in politics. And unlike the already-committed party faithfuls, these “bored” people are important prospects, because they are liable to be “floaters” and because they don’t have so much preconceived ideology to be broken down.

There are some people who really do find everything boring except (say) TV soaps, their local rivalries, or football. So you can expect some to drop out at this stage.

The rotten political system

What we now want to establish in our victim’s oops I meant prospect’s mind is the idea that there’s something seriously wrong with politics in this country. We are helped by the fact that most already think this anyway!

Again we ask questions, and again we don’t want to provoke them into proclaiming an existing standpoint. We start with a couple of commonplace easy starters. Then we use some very challenging leading questions, which most people will never have been exposed to

before – the media never raise them – and to which most people will have the sense to give the only sensible answer. Those who don't we can just forget about.

“Do you think politicians are the most honest people?”

“Would you say they are all in politics just so they can be helpful to the community?”

“Would you think it acceptable for MPs to be offered bribes to vote for legislation?” (yes/no) “That's what the party whips system is all about – if MPs vote as the whips say then they give them perks, vote otherwise and they get penalised instead. Is that a legitimate way to govern a country?”

At about this stage, certain reactions of your victim may become apparent. They may be treating the whole thing as a joke, giving silly answers, trying to wind you up. In that case, keep trying a little longer, and say perhaps “Yes, but seriously...” — but quite probably this person is not going to be of help to us and so you should end the encounter politely with “Well, thanks for your thoughts anyway”, or somesuch.

Or they may ask what your objective is in asking these questions. In that case, say “I will explain that in a moment, but first it would be best to work towards developing a shared understanding of the issues, rather than forming an instant attitude on the matter.”

You could add: “because what you think is as important as what I think”. (Which is flattering and true!)

We continue with the challenging questions, exposing the rottenness of the existing system. Don't worry if some of the questions provoke resistance or debate. You do not need to succeed with every one of your attacks on the system. Just a few should do.

“Are you aware that this government and the previous ones have broken their promises on numerous things?” “Such as?” (Errm, you need a list handy here!) “Cameron promised not to raise VAT but then did. Promised not to abolish the Education Maintenance Allowance. Promised to stop NHS reorganisations. Meanwhile the LibDems broke their promise on higher tuition fees. And the last Labour government broke numerous promises in their manifesto. There's a list on our website realdem.co. Not least Labour's promise of a referendum on the EU constitution.

“Freedom of information, improving the NHS, more police, cutting crime, right to roam, fox hunting, regulating arms exports, Tory promises to cut tax. That’s not the whole list I can assure you.”

“Would you say it is worth voting for promises which are usually broken anyway?”

“Would you say that before voting in an election, it is worthwhile bothering to carefully study all the issues and think about them and discuss them carefully with others, so you make a sound decision, all just for your one vote in fifty thousand?”

“Do you think that many or most people do do that careful studying and thinking and discussing?”

“Do you know of any country in the world where mass elections do not result in governments that are full of sleaze and corruption and incompetence?”

What alternatives?

By now, having considered these questions, if your victim has any sense he will recognise that mass elections are deeply flawed as a method of selecting governments. But usually it will be best not to ask whether they do indeed think this (you will have sussed already!); better to move straight on to the question of alternatives (the victim may jump on to this themselves, asking “Yes but what alternative is there?”, or “So you think we should have a Marxist dictatorship instead then?”).

So you ask: “What alternatives to mass elections are you aware of?” (And of course less than one in a million of the human race are aware of the alternative which you have in mind!)

They will probably come up with one or two ideas themselves, or after a little pause you could suggest some yourself – but not realdem yet!

Dictatorship or an emperor.

A committee of our own team of experts, to rule benevolently for ever.

These options are unlikely to be seriously enthused about. But you may meet an enthusiast for:

Referendums on everything, using computers.

Remember this: DON'T suggest this one yourself unless you are fully confident of getting the following points across! You will need to answer the referendums idea, as follows. "Some fatcat people are pushing this idea, reckoning to make massive fortunes from selling the voting equipment. But it is even more flawed than mass elections, for three reasons. Firstly, if your vote is only one of many thousands then voters will not take the trouble to carefully study the issues, and discuss and think about them. Secondly, there is no satisfactory way to decide what questions should be asked, or when. Thirdly, it is very vulnerable to manipulation, as the Euro example showed – the Blair-Brown government invented excuses to put off the Euro referendum until a time when the voters could be temporarily fooled into giving the answer that the fatcats wanted, and then it would have been all over for ever. If the government had not been actually a pack of manipulating crooks they could have easily carried out the Euro referendum *ten* times over!"

Referendums-on-everything is a simplistic idea fervently adhered to with a religious degree of devotion. But don't ever say it's simplistic – you can only lose by "insulting" your prospects, so never do it!

Only very rarely will your victim come up with the random selection idea himself. "You could choose MPs on the lottery" is the sort of phrase you'll likely hear. If he doesn't suggest it himself, do not blurt it out yourself. You have to prepare the ground before planting the seed!

There is a better alternative!

The temptation to break into a lecture is getting stronger at this point, but can be avoided with a little more preparatory planning.

First we'll consider the situation where our victim has just said "You could choose MPs by the lottery – though that would be a silly idea I suppose".

You reply: "Well, actually there have been several books published about that sort of idea, such as one in Australia by John Burnheim, and one in the US by Brian Martin. And quite a lot of studies have been carried out into policy juries in several countries. Here's a flyer (advert) for the Brian Martin book" (show the flyer to your victim).

You could add a touch of flattery here!: "So your ideas are not all as daft as you may think!"

Then you ask: “Have you ever heard any criticisms of the random selection (/selection by lottery) idea?” (Well of course not!) “But I guess you may be wondering whether there may be some way that it won’t work properly.”

A positive introduction of the idea

Before continuing, let's consider the alternative scenario in which the victim does not come up with the random selection idea himself.

What you must then do is start by introducing the “credentials” of the idea, a bit like when journalists say “And we have here with us Professor Bloggs of the University of Infinite Expertise to discuss the issue with us”. Quite possibly Prof Blogg’s ideas are codswallop, but so what, he’s the professor so must be listened to with faith!

Otherwise every major “new” idea comes to the listener with a built-in assumption that it must be crackpot rubbish. You have already seen such a “presenting of credentials” in the previous section. Here’s how it goes in this second situation, where your victim hasn’t suggested the idea himself.

You say: “There is another alternative which we haven’t mentioned” (Don’t say that most people have never heard of it). “There have been several books published about this other alternative, such as one by John Burnheim in Australia, and one by Brian Martin in the US.”

“And haven’t you heard about policy juries?”

“No/yes” (Shyly brandish the Brian Martin flyer at this point, while saying:)

“Yes, there’ve been quite a lot of studies carried out into policy juries in several countries. Here’s a flyer (advert) for the Brian Martin book” (show the flyer to your victim).

“Have you ever heard any criticisms of the random selection (/selection by lottery) idea?. Or criticism of policy juries?” (Well of course not!)

“But I guess you may be wondering whether there may be some way that it won’t work properly.”

Discussing objections

Some people have a narrowminded notion that cleverness is measured by the number of half-baked excuses they can find for deriding every non-standard idea. If your prospect is “clever” you are likely to be instantly told of at least one supposedly fatal flaw in the random selection idea.

Which is great, because you will have an answer to all their doubts! Those few who persist in being infinitely “cleverer” than you, you can leave to roast in their own sunshine.

By contrast there will be others who will not be able to bring up any explicit objections, but who still remain sceptical at this point. Great, you can get the objections in before they do!

The full answers to most objections are presented in our other booklet *Objections to Real Democracy*, which you will hopefully have read by now. Make sure you have the latest version of it (dates are in small print at the back).

[The next few paragraphs assume that you have a set-up whereby people can join the party there and then. This will not always be the case. You might then need to suggest they go to the realdem.co website to sign up, or send in a cheque or standing order form.]

At this point in the discussion you will need to sort out how long you have available for discussion of objections. If you are both happy to spare 10-30 minutes for full discussion, then it would be best to do that, so that the prospect can decide there and then whether to join the party, before it gets put off, forgotten about, or whatever.

But if there is a shortage of time, it is important to avoid half-dealing with an objection. You should either present the whole picture on the matter or none, because it is found that a half-presented case makes people more resistant to the full case later.

So, if the situation is not convenient for fully discussing an objection, then you must present none of the answers to that objection. Instead you should simply say:

“This booklet of ours (*Objections to Real Democracy*) [and also the book *What they aren’t telling you!*] provides the answers to that objection, along with most other objections that people raise. And it also shows that there aren’t any problems of corruption, incompetence, difficulty of organising, rigging of results, sabotage by a Stalin-type

takeover, other disagreeable consequences, and how it can be introduced.” (have this list ready in memory, but don’t repeat any which you have already just mentioned of course!).

Then say: “The key thing is that the Real Democracy Party doesn’t have to choose the worst possible design of the system, it can choose the best of all the possibilities. And they really have done a thorough job of researching the matter”.

Give your victim time to think about it. Don’t rush him into deciding what to do next. Try counting to ten. But on the other hand you won’t want to wait for ever. So you may wish to say:

“Would you like to think about it a bit longer, take the booklet and think about it? Or would you prefer to join now while it’s convenient?”

At this stage (‘closing the sale’ in marketing jargon) you must now *avoid* yes/no options such as “would you like to join?” Instead use the choosing formula just above.

If your prospect chooses to think about it

“Yes I would like to think about it a bit more. Can I have the booklet for free?”

“Yes – we’d prefer a donation but of course if you’re not sure yet then we can’t really expect you to pay for it, can we?” “There’s also this membership form which you can take. When you join we send you more info about what’s happening, and how you can get involved in all sorts of ways.” “Could even become an MP!”

And continue: “If you like we could take a note of your contact details and then phone or call by to check up on what you think of it”. (Note that you are presenting it as ‘we are consulting you for your opinion’ rather than ‘we are proposing a second attempt at signing you up’!) Ask for practical details such as when best to phone or call by, etc.

Then you can finish off with “Well, thanks for your time, its been interesting talking it over with you, and we look forward to hearing from you again. Goodbye!”

Having just finished the encounter, recall what happened and make any notes which may be useful. A handy ‘notepad’ can be made by folding a sheet of A4 in half then half again.

If your prospect expresses interest in joining immediately

“What does joining involve?” or “How do I join?”

“It’s just a matter of filling in this form and paying the membership fee, which is £10 minimum rate, £15 standard rate, or if you’re particularly high-class you can think up your own amount.” (If talking to an obviously poor person, only mention the £10.)

“If you join now we can give you this membership introduction pack, or alternatively we can post it to you.” Then when the prospect has either fulfilled the formalities or decided to defer a decision, you can finish off as described above.

And that’s it. Time to practice on another "victim"!

Strengthening your presentation

That’s the basic script finished with. But you will probably have already guessed that conversations don’t always work quite so straightforwardly in practice. The next part of our course deals with these complications, and with ways of improving your presentation more generally. You can get part two from your sponsor, your local branch, or the RDP HQ

Congratulations on completing part one!

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