

# Toolkit for Organizing Tabling



Tabling is an organizing tool that lets you meet people where they're at. Whether you're tabling at a community event, on a street corner, in the lobby of your building, or in another public space in your community, you have the opportunity to have conversations with folks about the work that you're doing to see if they're interested in getting involved. It's also a great way to build leadership.



## preparing to table

Tabling is the outreach method that takes the least amount of work to organize. It gives you the opportunity have several short conversations about your issue with folks who are in places that could indicate that they would be a good fit for the Resident Action Project.

- 1. Pick a strategic location to table.** Is there an event happening where the people you are trying to reach will be? Is there a certain day of the week where folks come to the front desk to pay rent in your building? Try to pick a time, location, and event that will give you lots of opportunities to talk with folks.
- 2. Gather materials that you'd like to use.** This could include sign-up sheets, brochures, information sheets, treats, etc.
- 3. Write up a few talking points.** Generally, folks stopping by a table respond to a short snapshot of what your organization does. A few folks might want to stay and have longer conversations. Write down a few talking points ahead of time, and include info about events, upcoming actions, signing up for the mailing list, etc.
- 4. Follow up with staff** from the Resident Action Project after the event to pass along the information from the sign up sheets and to debrief your tabling experience.

# leadership and planning

**Tabling is a great way to build leadership in volunteers who are interested in helping with outreach.**

## Setting a Strategic Goal

There are many reasons that you might end up tabling. It could be a one-off for an event that you were invited to. It could also be a strategic part of your organization. For example, if you're trying to educate people about your group, you might ask if you can set up a table at a volunteer fair in a community that you are trying to reach. You could also ask to set up a table near the front desk of a building when people are coming by on the first of the month to pay their rent. In any case, here are some things to consider:

1. What are you hoping to get out of this tabling? (Building leadership; building our list; recruiting people for an event; building a relationship with an organization that is hosting the event we are tabling at)
2. Who are you reaching by tabling?
3. To most effectively get what you want out of tabling, how should you best use the few minutes that we get to talk with people, and which materials are most important?
4. How will you follow up with people after tabling?

## Sample Script

For most people, you won't have the opportunity to talk for more than a minute or two. Try to write a script that is short and to the point, but also include some talking points for people who are seeking more information.

### **Example Script for Tabling in a Building:**

"Hi! Thanks for stopping by our table! We are the Resident Action Project, and we are working on housing and homelessness issues. We're holding an event in a couple of weeks nearby, and we'd love for you to join us. Do you think you can make it? Great! Please sign up on this list, and here's a flyer for the event! Feel free to invite anyone else who may be interested."

# sign-up sheet

Sign up to learn more about the Resident Action Project!

**Name**

**Email**

**Phone Number**

**City**

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# follow-up form

**Please fill out this form and contact Resident Action Project staff to set up a short debrief conversation.**

What was the date and location of your tabling session? Was it associated with an event?

How did it go? What went well, and what was challenging?

How many people did you talk to? How did you feel the conversations went?

Are there any follow-ups that you need support with? For example, did anyone ask for some more information or for a one-on-one meeting?

How did you feel about the support that you got from RAP staff? What did we do well, and where can we improve?

Please pass along the sign up sheet information to RAP staff to put into the database.