

Disagree Better Candidate Blueprint

Tone Tips

- Acknowledge differences and disagreements.
- Be you! Don't shy away from personality.
- Use calm, direct language, not slogans or spin.
- Avoid sarcasm, defensiveness, or performative gestures.
- Keep it short (60 seconds or less) and visually entertaining.

Communication Tips

1. Start with Shared Identity

Open with both candidates introducing themselves and acknowledging they are opponents. This models transparency and mutual recognition.

Example: "I'm [Name], your [Party] candidate for [Office]". "And I'm [Name], your [Other Party] candidate for [Same Office]."

2. Affirm Shared Values

Name the values you share — the more specific to your community and context, the better (e.g., constituent concerns, location, election cycle, etc.)

Example: "We are both committed to [democracy, liberty, justice, peaceful transitions, fair elections, civility, problem-solving] etc..that make our state and country strong."

3. Frame Disagreement as Legitimate

Clearly state one thing you actively disagree with your opponent about. Don't shy away from the fact that you disagree passionately on some or many things; including specifics adds interest and feels genuine. Clarify that you differ on how to achieve shared goals, or perhaps their priority, but not whether those goals matter.

Example: "We just disagree about how to get there. And that's okay – it's healthy to have those debates."

4. Model Civic Trust

Pledge to reject political violence, honor election results, will work with whoever wins office, support peaceful transitions, etc.

Example: "No matter who wins, we will support the outcome and stand for civility and America."

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Spencer Cox / Chris Peterson “One Nation” 60 second campaign spot October 2020

Produced by Boncom in collaboration with both candidate campaigns

C: I’m Spencer Cox, your Republican candidate for Utah governor.

P: And I’m Chris Peterson, your Democratic candidate for governor.

C: We are currently in the final days of campaigning against each other.

P: But our common values transcend our political differences and the strength of our nation rests on our ability to see that.

C: We are both equally dedicated to the American values of democracy, liberty and justice for all people.

P: We just have different opinions on how to achieve those ideals.

C: But today we’re setting aside those differences to deliver a message that is critical for the health of our nation.

P: That whether you vote by mail or in person we will fully support the results of the upcoming presidential election regardless of the outcome.

C: Although we sit on different sides of the isle we are both committed to American civility and a peaceful transition of power.

P: And we hope Utah will be an example to the nation...

C: Because that is what our country is built on.

P: Please stand with us on behalf of our great state and nation.

C: My name is Spencer Cox.

P: And I’m Chris Peterson.

BOTH: And we approve this message.

#StandUnited #DisagreeBetter

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Sample Script

Joint Campaign Ad Script – Local Officials “Better Together”

Candidate A: I’m [Name], your [Party] candidate for [City Council / County Commission / Local Office].

Candidate B: And I’m [Name], your [Other Party] candidate for the same seat.

A: Let’s be clear—we don’t agree on much.

B: Our visions for [City/County Name] are miles apart.

A: We clash on policy, priorities, and how to lead.

B: But we agree on this: disagreement isn’t the enemy. Disrespect is.

A: We both care deeply about [City/County Name]—its families, its future, and its civic soul.

B: And we believe our community deserves leaders who fight for their ideas without tearing each other down.

A: That’s why we’re standing together today; not to pretend we’re alike, but to prove that principled conflict is the right thing to do.

B: We commit to a campaign that’s tough on ideas, not on people.

A: No cheap shots. No character assassinations.

B: Just a real contest of visions, with respect at the center.

A: Win or lose, we will both honor the outcome and keep working for this community.

B: Because democracy isn’t just about who wins, it’s about how we show up.

A: I’m [Name].

B: And I’m [Name].

BOTH: And we approve this message.

#DisagreeBetter