

Campaign Effects

Political Science

What campaigns actually change.

Well evidenced

- Personal contact raises turnout
- Reminders increase voting
- Registration barriers reduce it
- Campaigns activate existing predispositions
- Effects decay quickly

Weakly evidenced

- Large persuasion effects from advertising
- Single debates changing outcomes
- Message testing generalising across contexts
- Micro-targeting producing dramatic shifts

THE DIFFERENCE THAT MATTERS

Most campaign spending moves turnout among existing supporters rather than converting opponents.

Educational reference. Field experiments in this area are unusually strong, and they consistently find modest persuasion effects.