

**RUNNING
A
POLITICAL CAMPAIGN**

The Essential, The Necessary & The Good to Know

**A Comprehensive Guide and Workbook
for Newcomers and Veterans of Political Campaigns**

CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION

PART I—THE ESSENTIAL

CHAPTER 1 — AN OVERVIEW

CHAPTER 2 — GETTING ORGANIZED

CHAPTER 3 — GETTING ORGANIZED; WORKSHEETS

PART II — THE NECESSARY

CHAPTER 4 — CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

CHAPTER 5 — CAMPAIGN STRATEGY; WORKSHEETS

CHAPTER 6 — FUNDING THE CAMPAIGN

CHAPTER 7 — FUNDING THE CAMPAIGN; WORKSHEETS

CHAPTER 8 — COMMUNICATIONS

CHAPTER 9 — COMMUNICATIONS; WORKSHEETS

CHAPTER 10 — SCHEDULING TOOLS

CHAPTER 11 — CAMPAIGN BUDGETS; WORKSHEET

PART III — THE GOOD TO KNOW

CHAPTER 12 — SPEECHES AND PUBLIC SPEAKING

CHAPTER 13 — LETTER WRITING

CHAPTER 14 — FORUMS AND DEBATES

CHAPTER 15 — EVENT PLANNING

CHAPTER 16 — ASSEMBLING YOUR CAMPAIGN TEAM

CHAPTER 17 — TOP 10 THINGS TO REMEMBER ABOUT THE MEDIA

CHAPTER 18 — ADVANCED LESSON ON POLLING

RUNNING A POLITICAL CAMPAIGN: THE ESSENTIAL, THE NECESSARY AND THE GOOD TO KNOW

“During a political campaign everyone is concerned with what a candidate will do on this or that question if he is elected except the candidate; he's too busy wondering what he'll do if he isn't elected” Everett Dirksen

INTRODUCTION

If you have decided to seek political office, there are many approaches you might take to running your campaign. You could just “throw your hat into the ring” and then spend whatever free time you have shaking hands in shopping centers or knocking on doors until Election Day. Or, you could hire a professional campaign consultant and a large campaign staff that will take care of most of the campaign details so that you can use your time to raise money (to pay for the staff, consultants and communications) and attend campaign events. Or, you could do something in between these extremes such as gather some friends and advisors together to form a volunteer campaign committee to help you raise money and decide how to spend it.

The fact is that every campaign is different. Some, such as those for very small, local offices, may be won simply by shaking more hands than your opponent. Others, such as those for statewide offices, generally require the services of professional staff and consultants in order to reach the number of voters needed for victory. Most campaigns fall somewhere in between.

Whatever elective office you are seeking, however, there are some common elements in virtually all political campaigns. For starters, all candidates have to officially “qualify” for the office they seek. Likewise, all candidates who raise campaign funds (including from the candidate himself) must file campaign disclosure documents with some level of government. And virtually all candidates must make decisions about how to allocate their campaign resources, whether those resources are the candidate’s time, volunteers’ time or campaign funds.

Another common characteristic of all political campaigns—regardless of how small or large the office being sought—is the clear advantage gained by those candidates who develop a campaign plan early and adhere to it (with minor modifications as needed) through Election Day. Even if the campaign plan is no more complex than organizing the candidate’s time so that he or she can shake as many hands as possible, it is important to make sure that this is the most effective use of campaign resources and that the plan is implemented as thoroughly as possible.