

A Campaign Manual for Libertarians & Other Outsiders

Special **Libertarian Party of New Mexico** Edition

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CREDENTIALS

Political training from National Campaign Institute, American Association of Political Consultants (former member), and Campaigns and Elections.

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PRELIMINARY NOTES

This material is extracted from a larger work that also included sections on communications, outreach, organizing, lobbying, polling, and leadership.

Generally this manual has been used at seminars where the information has been presented orally as well as in printed form. Material in [brackets] will be personal comments offered for this special LPNM edition.

THE DECISION TO RUN

Should you run for public office? In pondering this question, first consider your objectives.

If you are considering running an educational campaign to focus attention on one or more issues, or as an outreach activity for a political party or committee, you may be able to achieve many short-range objectives at a relatively small cost. On the other hand, if you continue to run outreach campaigns you can cast yourself as a fringe candidate and marginalize your party.

If you are considering running to actually get elected, ask yourself some serious questions:

1. **CAN I WIN?** Review "Elements of Winning Campaigns" [below]. If you are running as an independent or third party candidate, some preliminary polling and district analysis (of demographics and voting patterns) can help you determine if any "outsider" candidate has a chance. [Have both major parties held the office? Are the results frequently close?]
2. **CAN MY FAMILY HANDLE THE STRESS AND NEGLECT?** Running a serious campaign is much like starting a new business. It demands virtually every waking hour.
3. **DO I HAVE THE TIME?** Every waking hour is a serious commitment. Decide before you start if you really have the time. If you are working a 40-hour week and raising a family, seriously question if you can invest the hours necessary to win.

4. CAN I AFFORD IT? Much of your initial campaign money will probably have to come out of your own pocket, especially if you are a newcomer without a track record, or running without party-machine support.

5. DO I HAVE THE STOMACH FOR HARDBALL POLITICS? It can be a dirty business. If you can't take it as well as you can dish it out, or if you get rattled easily, you may not have a candidate's personality.

SIX ELEMENTS OF WINNING CAMPAIGNS

Winning political campaigns typically have six things in common. The more of these elements present in your campaign, the better your chances of winning. Each of these factors should be addressed before you announce your candidacy publicly. [I've know many Libertarians who have believed and argued that they could do some end run, or take some short cut, or use some magic bullet and pull off an upset. It's possible but so rare as to conclude, for all practical purposes, that it WON'T HAPPEN. There is no free lunch, no magic bullet, you will not pull off an end run. Do it right the first time.]

The elements:

1. RESOURCE PARITY. What did the winner spend in each of the three previous elections for the office you are seeking? The highest figure is your minimum base. If you are running against an incumbent, add at least another 25%. If you are an independent or third-party candidate, add at least another 25%. Get the money, do everything else right, and you might have a chance.

THE BOTTOM LINE AXIOM: "All other factors being equal, whoever spends the most money, wins. All other factors are never equal, but whoever spends the most money generally wins anyway."

2. SCIENTIFIC RESEARCH AND MARKETING. A campaign is a business with two products aimed at two markets. The products are the candidate persona and the message. Research polling can help you determine how to position each product for its respective market. A friendly grad student from your local campus could be very useful in conducting early polls cheaply and effectively.

3. NAME RECOGNITION. When voters don't know anything about the candidates, there is a tendency to vote for the most familiar name, especially for lower level offices. If you own a business with your name as part of the business name, that's a big plus.

4. FAVORABILITY. In addition to name recognition, you must be likable. Ronald Reagan won not by converting Americans to conservatism but because they liked him. Bill Clinton didn't win by converting people to liberalism, but because people liked him. Here's a hint for being liked:

THE DEMOGRAPHIC AFFINITY AXIOM: "The more people perceive you to be the way they are, the more receptive they will be to you and your ideas. The more people perceive you to be different than they are, the more you and you ideas will be seen as a threat." [Sad, but true. If the "average" voter in your district is a one-legged Irishman and the number one sport is tidily winks, you prospects are greatly enhanced if you are a one-legged Irishman who plays tidily winks.]

5. AGENDA AFFINITY. Agenda affinity is the basic communications principle of addressing the voters in terms of their issues and issues in terms of their values.

THE AGENDA AFFINITY AXIOM: "If you want to pursue your agenda, you must win. If you want to win, you must pursue the voters' agenda."

THE CONSTANT VALUES AXIOM: "It's easier to convince people that your position is consistent with their values than it is to change their values."

[Negative and off-message issues will come up but still, a skilled activist or candidate can communicate even the most radical ideas from a position of affinity. See "Handling Issues," below.]

6. CAMPAIGN PLAN. Winning campaigns are generally well planned. A plan is written. A plan is comprehensive. And a plan is something you actually go by.

THE MARKET - WHAT VOTERS WANT

THE HARD VOTER. The hard voter is 15% to 20% of the electorate. The hard voter votes on the basis of issues and will attempt to correlate candidates and issues. This market includes many single-issue voters who can be targeted on that basis.

THE SOFT VOTER. The soft voter is 80% to 85% of the electorate. The soft voter votes on the basis of perceptual factors such as name recognition, favorability, party affiliation, and demographic affinity. Soft voters are sold on such factors as your personality, qualifications, community ties, and affinity. [Some soft voters *think* they are voting on issues but are really voting on perceptions - a Democrat may vote for a candidate who "supports the working man" when in reality the particular Democrat candidate may have a very anti-union record, or a Republican may be perceived as anti-tax when the particular Republican has consistently voted for higher taxes.]

IMPLICATIONS. Hard voters and soft voters represent two different markets. Your hard-voter campaign should command about 20% of your resources. Target hard voters with a tabloid addressing key issues and white papers aimed at single-issue voters. The product is the message.

The soft-voter campaign should command about 80% of your resources. Target soft voters with a "warm-and-fuzzy" brochure emphasizing qualifications, family, and community ties. The product is the persona of the candidate.

Hard voters will cross party lines but third-party candidates may have to deal with the wasted-vote syndrome. Soft voters will cross party lines for candidates with strong name recognition and favorability. Crossover votes occur more in high-profile races - the less the voters know about a candidate, the more likely they are to vote the party line, so name recognition becomes even more important. Generally, more crossover votes come from Democrats than Republicans - "Reagan Democrats."

For third party and independent candidates, virtually all of the votes will be crossover votes. They can come from both major parties, especially if targeting is used.

THE CAMPAIGN PLAN

OVERVIEW and THEME. The overview is a summary of the campaign strategy, generally in the form of a narrative. The theme is the total package of candidate persona, the message, and uniqueness factors such as campaign colors and logo. The theme should be unique but not bizarre, and *must* be compatible with the values of the voters.

The theme should contain a few - and *only* a few - issues that are strong positives. A positive is any issue on which your position gains more votes than it loses. Conversely, a negative is any issue on which your position costs more votes than it gains. You never know until you poll. Review the *Agenda Affinity Axiom* and the *Constant Values Axiom*. [In my seminars, I draw two large circles, overlapping. The first is labeled "What we believe." The second is labeled "What they want to hear." The middle part, the overlap, is labeled "What the candidate's issues should be."]

Campaigning - salesmanship - is emphasizing positives and downplaying negatives. Know your negatives (your opponents will) and have a strategy for dealing with them.

THE TIME LINE. The time line is a chronological outline of the campaign. It is expanded into the campaign calendar and the campaign schedule.

The time line is a crucial element of the campaign plan because timing is so important in politics. Campaigns operate within an election cycle. First there are numerous legal deadlines that can't be missed. A candidate who announces too early becomes a target of potential opponents early and spreads resources too thin by campaigning over too long a segment of the cycle. A candidate who announces too late may have trouble raising money, solidifying the base, and reaching enough voters. [Editorial note: "Early" nomination is an abomination for serious candidates. I opposed putting it in the LPNM Constitution and the only two times we ever used it were both unmitigated disasters. I won't vote to early-nominate anybody anymore, and I advocate removing the early nomination provision from the LPNM Constitution. jk]

STAGES. Base your time line on the (overlapping) campaign stages below:

1. GROUNDWORK STAGE: The decision to run is best made at least two years before the election. The groundwork period should take most of the first year. This is the time to thoroughly research your district and to do a preliminary "apprenticeship."

Stalk the office you are seeking. For example, if you want to run for county commission, start attending county commission meetings now. Do not declare your candidacy yet. Don't even try to recruit here. Your purpose is to learn the job, meet other members of the public who attend those meetings, meet the newsies who cover the meetings, and make friends with anybody imaginable who is involved with the county commission. If you are serious about winning (as opposed to "outreach" races), IT IS IMPORTANT THAT YOU VISUALIZE YOURSELF ON THE COUNTY COMMISSION.

The same applies for state legislature. If that's what you want to run for, get down to your state capitol and watch it in action. Go to committee meetings. Shake hands with legislators of various

ilks. [If possible, and it's hard for all of us, keep your mouth shut and your ears open as much as you can.]

Also during the groundwork period, start saving money. Remember, it's like starting a new business.

2. PRE-ANNOUNCEMENT STAGE: Start formalizing your plan. Start putting your committee and management team together. Continue polling and research. Learn the election code from your state. Start serious fund raising. Time your announcement based on the nomination process, early enough to secure the nomination. If you are nominated by a convention and required to submit petitions, it's a plus to show up at the convention with the petitioning done. If you need a lot of signatures, of course you will need to announce earlier.

3. NAME RECOGNITION STAGE: This stage focuses on making your name a household word by sheer repetition and exposure. The name recognition stage generally encompasses and overlaps the nominating process. That means you may be involved in establishing your party credentials and solidifying your base. Commence voter ID operations and continue fund raising.

4. ADVOCACY STAGE. Start field operations. Work on favorability. This stage is the major thrust of the campaign and is concentrated during the last three months.

5. ATTACK STAGE. It would be great if you could avoid this stage, but you must at least challenge your opponents' program. Tread carefully. If you initiate an attack without sufficient name recognition and favorability, you will be perceived as a crank. However, as much as voters say they don't like negative campaigning, they always respond to it. It's best if *someone else* can be the hit man, especially if the attack can be perceived as personal, i.e., character issues, your opponent's DWI arrest. The more you can be perceived as the nice guy, the better. [In a three-way race with major-party candidates, let them beat up on each other while you stand back shaking your head in disgust. If you find dirt on you Demo opponent, feed it to your Rep opponent and vice versa.] If you attack an opponent's program, kill him with kindness first - comment on how well meaning and sincere he is, then explain why he is mistaken with this particular idea.

6. GET OUT THE VOTE (GOTV) STAGE. Plan to get your voters to the polls. This is a major objective of your voter ID operation. This is especially important [and generally most neglected] by independent and third-party candidates as these candidates typically show a sharp drop in the polls just before the election. GOTV will determine a close race.

FINANCE PLAN. The campaign plan should include a modular, up-datable finance plan. More below.

HANDLING ISSUES

Be prepared to handle issues - positives and negatives - in situations where you don't control the agenda. Never lie about your position, but do handle positives and negatives differently. Also, handle issues differently in the campaign mode than you would in the outreach mode. Here are different ways of dealing with issues:

1. MACHO FLASHING. This is phrasing a position in the strongest, most radical rhetoric possible. It's great fun but rarely productive, especially in the campaign mode. You can use it for strong positives in solidifying your base, and you can get away with sometimes if your position is an extremely strong positive in your district. Never macho flash negatives, and even with positives, people react badly to absolutism so be careful.

2. EDUCATION. Education is converting people to your philosophy. This should be an outreach function of your party, not the point of your serious, to-win campaign. Don't try to educate voters: it wastes your time and irritates the voter.

3. SOUND BITING. Sound biting is phrasing positions in concise statements that resonate, reinforce, and sell. Quotable one-liners are the best sound bites of all. This is the best way to handle most issues most of the time!

4. SOFT PEDDLE. Soft peddling is de-emphasizing negatives. Have a plan for de-fusing those hot potato issues without lying about your position or letting your opponent choose your negatives as the main issues of the campaign. [Example below.]

5. ABANDONMENT. Abandonment is simply refusing to take a position on an issue. This is perfectly legitimate if something really isn't an issue to be dealt with in the office you are running for. Why lose votes by taking *any* public position on abortion if you are running for county commission, or on zoning if you are running for congress.

6. REVERSAL. This is changing your position based on public opinion. This is all too common, but unacceptable for principled candidates. Let public opinion determine how you handle issues, and which issues you make part of your campaign, but not what you believe. [If you think reversal is ok, I hope you will quit reading now because I have no desire to help you win.]

[Soft-peddling, example. Here's how I would handle drug legalization:

OUTREACH MODE: Since we own our own bodies, we determine what to put into them. So long as we don't initiate force against others, nobody, least of all government, has the right to initiate force against us to dictate which substances we may or may not ingest.

CAMPAIGN MODE: I've seen first hand the devastation that drugs can do to our children and communities but the government's war on drugs has failed, in many cases is making the problem worse, and violates the rights of law-abiding adults in the process so I think we need to explore alternatives.

My bottom-line position didn't change but my presentation did, and in campaign mode I allowed the listeners to perceive my position in the framework of their values. Remember the *Constant Values Axiom!*

Learn more about personal communications by reading "How to Win Friends and Influence People" by Dale Carnegie and with material from the Advocates for Self-Government.]

CAMPAIGN STAFF

A serious candidate generally does not have the time or the expertise to micro-manage the campaign. Among the most important decisions a candidate will make is who will serve on the campaign committee and run the operation.

For each anticipated job: write a job description, list ideal job qualifications, and determine if the job will be performed by a paid staff member, a contractor, or a volunteer. List and prioritize prospective staffers and start putting your team together. [If you are serious, there is no reason to depend exclusively on part-time volunteers, even for local, lower level office. You get the campaign you design and pay for. At least try to get a full-time manager and scheduler, even if they are volunteers. Also, you need an especially competent Treasurer as late filing of reports can get you into legal trouble in New Mexico.]

Remember, a job is a collection of duties. One person can conceivably do more than one job, and a job can be divided among more than one person.

THE INNER CIRCLE. The key members of your team are your inner circle, and the people you need to be in constant touch with throughout the campaign. The key positions are:

- Campaign Manager
- Campaign Consultant
- Finance Director
- Treasurer
- Research Director
- Volunteer Coordinator
- Media Coordinator
- Scheduler

OTHER JOBS. There's always something to do in a campaign: your manager and volunteer coordinator should always be able to put someone to work as soon as they volunteer. You can always use legal advisors, accountants, fundraisers, office staff, fold-stuff-and-stamp volunteers, phone bank callers, organizers, neighborhood canvassers, advance teams, sign builders, graphic artists, driver/aides, and GOTV drivers. Keep adding to this list.

THE SCHEDULER. The scheduler is one of the most important jobs in the campaign. This individual should be a well-organized "type A" personality, a good salesperson, a researcher, and most of all, a super booking agent.

VOTER ID

The phone bank callers and research team should maintain a data base of voters. Phone canvassing of voters should attempt to identify "for" voters, "against" voters, and "undecided" voters (as well as "likely" voters who have voted in the two previous elections and "new" voters). "For" voters are targeted for get-out-the-vote and fundraising. "Undecided" voters are targeted for persuasion. "Against"

voters are the last priority. The research team can cross match various lists to the voter list to identify special interest voters for single-issue targeting.

THE TARGETING AXIOM: "If you want to pick cherries, go to the cherry tree."

Voter ID and tracking should continue throughout the campaign.

VOTER COMMUNICATIONS

THE POLITICAL PRACTICE AXIOM: "The theory of politics is about ideas. The practice of politics is about interpersonal relationships and communications."

Remember that in the end, all communication is to the individual.

SIGNS. Signs are used primarily to build name recognition so sheer volume of exposure is a key element. Other effectiveness factors are simplicity and uniqueness.

PHONE BANK. The phone bank is used for voter ID, targeted advocacy, fundraising, and GOTV. The phone bank can also be used for polling, but this should be done under the guidance of an expert to assure good, useable information.

Elements of successful phone-bank use are volunteer training, tested scripts, phone persona of the caller, soundness of the data on your call lists, and the number of calls – with more calls resulting in more effect.

FREE MEDIA. News coverage can be useful at all stages of the campaign to boost name recognition and favorability. Increase the effective use of free media by establishing personal relationships with media people, use of professional media kits and releases, news conferences, visits, and gimmicks.

PRINT MEDIA. Your print media will be used mostly during the advocacy stage. Your basic offerings should include an issue tabloid for hard voters, a "warm-and-fuzzy" brochure for soft voters, white papers for specifically targeted groups, and a basic business card. Use a double-size folding business card as a mini-brochure and include a photo.

Elements of effective use of print media include simplicity, visual effect, use of flow-through graphics and consistent theme, and the physical quality of the piece.

ELECTRONIC MEDIA. Radio and TV are used for name recognition, advocacy, and if necessary, the attack. A web site can be especially effective for hard voters, fund raising, and news media relations. Blog is a powerful tool.

A video or DVD, larger in scope than mere TV ads, can be useful for small group events and fundraising.

Elements of effective electronic media use are simplicity, repetition, testing, timing, uniqueness, and emotional appeal.

PERSONAL. There is no substitute for one-on-one voter contact. Make it effective: look the voter in the eye, offer a firm hand shake, flash a big smile, and use concise, clever, sincere sound bites.

CAMPAIGN ACTIVITIES

SCHEDULING. There should be a master schedule, kept by the scheduler, and a hard rule that nobody - not the candidate, not the spouse, not the manager – schedules anything without coordinating with the scheduler.

TIME. Budget the candidate’s time as you would any other scarce resource. It’s best if the candidate can campaign full time, but whatever time is available should be generally used as follows:

FUNDRAISING	50%
VOTER CONTACT	25%
MEDIA/SPEAKING	15%
STRATEGY/MANAGEMENT	10%

As the management team develops, the candidate can shift time from strategy and management to voter contact and media/speaking. For lower level offices such as county commission or state legislature, more time should be spent on direct voter contact with the goal of personally shaking hands with every voter in the district. For county wide, state wide, or congressional office, direct contact with every voter becomes less feasible and media operations become more important.

THE TIME AXIOM: “In politics, time is the enemy. Start early, work late.”

[While I ultimately judge people as individuals, there are a few traits that many Libertarians seem to have in common. Two that especially irritate me as well as hampering our efforts are a self-defeating mind set (I call it the choose-to-lose syndrome) and extreme procrastination. Way too many LP candidates make the decision to run at the convention that nominates them. These are not serious campaigns.]

THE SPEAKING CIRCUIT. The candidate must have a multi-purpose stump speech, and the scheduler must get lots of bookings. The stump speech will do more than get votes – it will get volunteers and donations.

Keep it simple – no long diatribes or complicated lessons. Remember, a campaign is largely a popularity contest. Use your stump speech to project yourself as wholesome. Watch your manners, avoid personal attacks on your opponents (get somebody else to do this), use lots of humor, and use lots of warm-fuzzy human-interest stuff. Don’t argue with voters in public. “I have some problems with your point but I’ll take it under advisement” is better than “That’s the dumbest idea I ever heard.” Make the voters like you, even the ones who disagree with you.

An aide should always accompany the candidate. If possible, candidate and aide should “work the crowd” after the speech. Everyone should leave with printed material. Take lots of photographs. A photo of the candidate *with* someone can be mailed to that someone later with a fundraising pitch.

DEBATES. Debates are a great way for new players to get on the game board. Generally, incumbents have nothing to gain and challengers have nothing to lose by debating. The risk is that the debate can build the challenger's credibility and force the incumbent, who has a record, on the defensive. Likewise, "establishment" candidates will try to keep "outsider" candidates out.

During the groundwork period, search the local newspapers for stories on previous elections and make a list of the venues where the candidates met in debate (or spoke individually). Start cultivating contacts in the sponsoring organizations. All too often, "outsider" candidates learn that they have been excluded from a debate only by reading about it in the paper after the fact. Homework and persistence can make the difference.

If you are excluded from a debate, show up anyway and go on the attack. This is one of the very few instances where it's justified to modify the nice-guy persona with indignation. Make your exclusion, not the debate on stage, the main story.

NEIGHBORHOOD CANVASSING. For races (county commission, state legislature, county wide in some counties) where it is physically possible to contact every voter in the district – which should be your objective – this could be the single most important candidate activity. Because some see this as going door-to-door bothering people, they find it very distasteful. Therein lies a potential edge if your opponents also find it distasteful and decline to do it. There just is no substitute for eyeball-to-eyeball contact between a candidate and voter.

Work off voting lists. You can arrange the data by address and print it so you can do block-by-block. If time permits, you can work the whole block, carrying voter registration forms so you can register new voters (but be aware of registration deadlines). If time is limited, prioritize. Target members of your own party and independents first. If you are an "outsider" in a two-way race with a major-party candidate, your next priority should be members of the other major party. As the voter ID team identifies "undecided" voters, these should be targeted regardless of party.

Ration your time. The number of voters you talk to is more important than the time spent with each voter. (For organizing, the inverse is true. Organizing is a qualitative operation while campaigning is a quantitative operation.) Carry door hangers for folks who aren't home, but plan to re-visit if possible. Keep a brief record of each visit for your voter ID team.

CROWD CANVASSING. Work those public crowds! The fair. The parade. Sunday afternoon in the park. The game. The races. Downtown. Campus. The Club. Church. Conventions. The Senior Citizens' Center. The factory. The flea market. Restaurants and bars. Votes come from people; so to get votes, go to where the people are. And don't forget your own events – rallies and fundraisers.

The drill for working crowds: keep your persona "on," take an aide (to keep you moving, collect data, and collect donations), ration your time per person (your aide can extricate you from tedious or unproductive conversations), and give everybody a handout.

GET OUT YOUR VOTE. Plan your GOTV operation early. Start with a plan for absentee and early voters. Once they've voted for you, they can't change their mind and their vote is in. [Well, except maybe in New Mexico.] When IDing "for" voters, ask if they need an absentee ballot or a ride to the polls and don't hesitate to arrange either. Keep your phone bank targeting "for" voters in the final days of the campaign, including election day. In the final stage, and especially on election day, constantly assume that you are just one vote behind and if you can just get one more vote you will win.

THE NUMBERS AXIOM: "The nature of elections is quantitative. Whoever gets the most votes, wins."

MAKE YOUR VOTES COUNT. Exit polling, if you can afford it, can help you determine if the election is being stolen. If you are allowed poll watchers, recruit, train and use them. [Don't forget to make sure you are on the ballot, including absentee ballots. Libertarians have been "inadvertently" left off ballots in New Mexico before.]

THE CAMPAIGN FINANCE PLAN

Make a budget, starting with projected spending. Review "Resource Parity" above.

[Projected costs and "rules of thumb" for various offices have appeared in the previous edition but are now deleted due to changing times and increased costs. Best to research previous elections for the office you are seeking as described in "Resource Parity."]

The cost-per-vote will increase with the number of votes you get. Your "base" votes are free or cheap once you get on the ballot, and each tier on your vote pyramid will cost a little more until you approach the magic "win" number at the top (51% in a two way, less in a three or four candidate race), where those last few votes are the most expensive. Major-party incumbents have a larger base, thus a head start. Plan to outspend your opponents, especially if one is an incumbent, and especially if you are a third-party or independent "outsider."

Plan your campaign strategy and operation first. Then fund the items in your plan, right down to the paper clips. Allow for unanticipated expenses.

Work from the campaign time line and create a budget time line. Allow plenty of lead time for raising the money. Develop contingency budgets based on worst-case and better-case scenarios. Planned expenditures should be prioritized.

Plan to have a *minimum* of 10% of your budget up front, and considerably more is considerably better. Most of this may have to come out of the candidate's pocket, especially if the candidate is an outsider.

The finance plan should be detailed, and well organized. Like the time line, the budget time line part of the plan should be referenced daily.

THE FINANCE COMMITTEE

Regard the campaign as your business and each member of the finance committee as a profit center.

Start with your known heavy hitters. If they can write big checks, so can their peers. Each additional finance committee member should have a specific area to target: an industry, a special interest group, a neighborhood, a specific event or other part of your program. Each member should have a specific dollar amount as an objective. A shrewd organizer will imply that some members – the heavy hitters – should feel obligated to make up the difference personally if they fall short of their objective.

THE FINANCE DIRECTOR. The finance director is a key player who will chair the finance committee and should be somebody special. This individual plans, supervises, monitors, and reports on all fundraising activities. The job requires good people skills, good organizational skills, and the ability to work under pressure as a crisis manager. The finance director should have credibility – which can be boosted by his or her own generous donation. This person must have time, commitment, connections, experience, savvy, reputation, and drive. A working knowledge of state election law is also required.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE – ASKING

THE ASKING AXIOM: “Ask and you shall receive.”

[In my seminars, I start this section with a demonstration. I ask everybody to take out a dollar bill and pass it up. As I’m putting the money in my wallet, I explain that it’s really easy to ask for money once you are past the emotional barrier. Most people have a mental block about asking, especially Libertarians. Get over it. Your campaign needs the money and the candidate will get better results than staff members. If you have to, go to a strange town where nobody knows you and panhandle just to get the feel of it. The only alternative, be independently wealthy.]

Five percent of voters will contribute to a political campaign *if asked*. Very few will contribute on their own initiative.

Know *why* people give. They vote based on perceptions. They give based on beliefs and utility.

ASKING – THE PROCESS. Here’s how to get the most out of asking for money:

1. Do your homework – know your prospect.
2. Send warm-up information before you call.
3. Establish rapport with the prospect before you ask.
4. Espouse a specific need and ask for a specific amount.
5. CLOSE. Don’t just hint – get the money!
6. Use pyramid action. Persuade your donors to leverage their contributions by getting their friends and associates to contribute.

CAMPAIGN FINANCE – SOURCES AND TECHNIQUES

SELF. Charity starts at home. Others won’t invest in you if you won’t invest in yourself. The candidate must get the ball rolling.

FRIENDS, FAMILY, AND ASSOCIATES. Are you in business? Do you have vendors? Customers? Club? Church? PTA? Neighbors? Your realtor? Your car dealer? Your doctor? Your lawyer? Old college buddies? And what about *their* associates?

MAJOR DONOR PROGRAM. This activity requires active personal involvement of the candidate.

Keys to success will include: the candidate's personal relationship with the donor, effective targeting, homework, and salesmanship – including the ability to overcome objections and to *close*. Video presentations have been effectively used as warm-ups for major donor programs.

Heavy hitters are probably going to want to know how you plan to win. Keep them well informed and make them feel like an important part of the team.

SMALL DONOR PROGRAM. The keys to a small donor program are aggressive prospecting – asking large numbers of potential donors (which should raise a lot of money although only a small percentage of them will actually donate) and repetitious giving – targeting previous donors for another contribution (those who have given before are most likely to give again).

Direct mail is the technique of choice, and a good campaign “insider” newsletter can be especially effective. [In-hand hard copy is probably most effective but e-mail and web use are increasingly useful too.]

Mail should be targeted, should establish need and utility, should be personalized as much as possible, and should make it clear that the reader is asked to send money. Mailing lists can be tested. Mail to a small percentage of each list, and the lists that generate the best responses can then be mailed to in their entirety. Different appeals can be tested in the same manner.

The basic elements of a mailer are the carrier (outside envelope), main letter, insert (second chance letter or gimmick), reply card, and return envelope. The well-designed mailer will include all of these elements and will employ flow-through graphics and consistent theme.

Each of the following factors, all testable, can influence the response to direct mail appeals:

- list quality
- targeting [Every list has a common denominator, and thus a basis for targeting.]
- telephone follow-up
- involvement gimmick
- uniqueness of carrier package
- postage
- celebrity endorsement
- letter copy
- color and physical quality
- premiums offered
- response card design

THE PHONE BANK. Telephone follow-up can double direct mail response. Dialogue can overcome objections. Use tested scripts and trained volunteers.

FUND RAISING EVENTS. Every rally is part fundraiser, but you should have events specifically for fundraising too.

Fancy formal dinners can be complex and risky but the payoff can be huge. Start early and allow plenty of time for planning and promotion. Keep it as simple as possible but make it appear fancy by using a hotel instead of a restaurant and use volunteers as ushers. Use names on the invitations, get confirmations by telephone follow-up, assign tables, and keep the menu basic. Use big-gun (name draw) endorsers for brief speeches, followed by the candidate, all of whom must ask, ask, ask!

If more appropriate for your district, you can scale down to something like a BBQ or picnic. But expect the take to be scaled down as well. Auctions can be used at either type of event.

Other fundraiser activities can include coffee klatches and video parties. Raffles, and even better, cash lotteries can be effective too.

YOUR PARTY. Your party may have money available for candidates in key races. These funds are generally very limited. Candidate viability will be a crucial factor in getting assistance from your party, especially if it's a "third" party. [The LPNM Central Committee has for the last several years given a few hundred dollars to each candidate on the ballot in a partisan race, and a little more to the candidate with the best prospects. LPNM also has "Operation Win One" which is a saving program intended to someday enable an especially serious, especially viable LPNM candidate to enter the field with overwhelming resources. An OWO grant is very difficult to get – for a reason – but if you are truly serious, read about it in the LPNM bylaws.]

PAC ACTION. Political Action Committees are looking for three things: 1. incumbency, 2, affinity, and 3. access.

It's been said that to get a loan from a bank, you must first prove that you don't need the money. The same might be said about PAC money. The PAC will want to see certified polling results showing that you are indeed a contender. They will also want to see your campaign plan, your finance plan, and your balance sheet.

It would help if your opponent(s) is especially noxious from the PAC point of view. A friend on the PAC board or staff to guide you and be your advocate would be a big plus. Remember, it's up to you (especially as an outsider candidate) to establish your viability and the PAC has absolutely nothing to gain by backing a loser. [Better to back nobody and not risk pissing off the winner.]

REMOTE DONORS. Folks from outside your district who have an ideological interest in your campaign should be invited to contribute. [Before you go buy a full-page ad in the LP News, call up some candidates who have done so and ask if they came out ahead.]

THE LAW

If you are operating on the assumption that it's a free country, you are setting yourself up for a bust. Before you announce your candidacy or accept donations, obtain the election code from your secretary of state's office (or, for federal office, the Code of Federal Regulations, Title II and the Federal Election Guide from the U.S. Government Printing Office).

NEVER trust any bureaucrat to give you accurate information. Get it in writing or have several witnesses. [Especially in New Mexico.]

WORKING WITH VOLUNTEERS

[This is from the “leadership” section of the larger work, but is included here because it’s pertinent.]

Here are nine tips for effectively using volunteers:

1. INVOLVE THEM. When they ask “What can I do to help?” their enthusiasm and commitment level is at its highest and should be reinforced with an assignment.
2. PACE THEM. If they are asked to do too much too fast, they will likely burn out early.
3. APPRECIATE THEM. Recognize their importance. Don’t take them for granted.
4. INCLUDE THEM. Old-timers tend to form cliques. Volunteers must feel welcome and be part of things. Keep them informed.
5. RESPECT THEM. Let them control the level of their commitment. What do *they* want to do for the campaign?
6. UNDERSTAND THEM. Will they have opposition from their families? Are they looking for learning, growth, or social opportunities? What motivates a particular volunteer?
7. TRAIN AND SUPERVISE THEM. Volunteers need to know precisely what is expected of them, and how to do it.
8. PROJECT A VISION OF VICTORY. Convey that their efforts will result in success. They won’t want to waste a lot of time on a lost cause.
9. PROJECT A VISION OF DEFEAT. Complacency has destroyed many a front runner. Why should a volunteer work so hard on a sure thing? Without the dedication of the volunteer, the bad guys will win.

As a practical exercise, reflect on organizations that you have volunteered for in the past – and why you no longer volunteer for that group.

SOME ADDITIONAL AXIOMS

From other sections of the larger work:

THE VICTORY THROUGH TENACITY AXIOM: “Winners never quit. Quitters never win. Never give up, no matter what.”

THE STRATEGIC PLANNING AXIOM: “You get there faster when you look at the map and plan your route before you leave.”

THE GOALS AXIOM: “Keep your eyes on the prize; you hit only what you aim at.”

THE HIGH GROUND AXIOM: “Never surrender the high moral ground. God is on your side.”

THE MEDIA AXIOM: “All most folks know is what they read in the paper or see on the tube.”

SOME QUOTES

“It is not enough to stare up the steps. We must step up the stairs.”

Vance Havner

“To make the world as it should be, we must succeed in the world as it is.”

Joseph

“If it’s worth doing, it’s worth doing right.”

Joseph’s dad

“There is only one way under high heaven to get anybody to do anything – that is by making the other person want to do it.”

Dale Carnegie

“Nothing happens without effort, without doing, without resistance; but of course some things seem to. You have to know how to consider things closely.”

Tu Li

GOOD LUCK! If this information helps you get elected, please send offers of patronage employment to Joseph Knight, Box 698, Flora Vista, NM 87415.