

10 STEPS

DEVELOP YOUR CAMPAIGN



- 1 Answer the Three Whys
- 2 Perform a SWOT Analysis
- 3 Research the Opposition
- 4 Research the Voters
- 5 Analyze Resources
- 6 Develop Campaign Messaging Strategy
- 7 Understand Campaign Finance Requirements
- 8 Establish Fundraising Goals & Strategy
- 9 Write Your Campaign Plan & Schedule
- 10 Assemble the Campaign Team

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ANSWER THE THREE WHYS

WHY ME?

WHY NOW?

WHY THIS OFFICE?

Pick the points from each of these answers that you believe are most persuasive and sharpen them into:

- a concise, 30-second answer – this is your “elevator speech”
- a 5-minute appeal
- a 10-minute speech

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PERFORM A SWOT ANALYSIS

A SWOT analysis helps you identify what you can manage on your own and what you will need assistance with.

Strengths

What do you or your campaign excel at? *EXAMPLES: You easily connect with people, have an optimistic character, are independently wealthy, etc.*

Weaknesses

What areas of your campaign are beyond your skill level? *EXAMPLES: You aren't good with technology, find numbers and finance intimidating, etc.*

Opportunities

What about you or your campaign gives you an advantage? *EXAMPLES: You have a well-known and established local business, you have access to major donors, etc.*

Threats

What has the potential to hurt your campaign? *EXAMPLES: You have a criminal background, you went through a messy divorce, etc.*

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RESEARCH THE OPPOSITION

If your opposition is an incumbent...

- What is his/her voting record on issues over the past few years?
- Does he/she always vote along party lines?
- Does he/she openly speak in meetings?
- How do you plan to do things differently than what they've already done?
- Who are his/her past campaign donors?

For any opponent...

- What is his/her residential, business, criminal and financial history?
- What are his/her strengths and weaknesses?
- What advantages does he/she have over you?

Keep constant tabs on your opponent:

- What has he/she posted on social media?
- What events is he/she attending?
- Who are his/her campaign donors?
- Is he/she saying anything about you? If so, what?

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RESEARCH THE VOTERS

Review Past Election Results For Your District

- How many registered voters are currently in your district?
- What percent of registered voters participated in the most recent November general election? What was the ratio of Democrat to Republican votes for the largest race on the ballot?
- What were those percentages and ratios for the most recent August primary election?

Identify the Issues Most Important to the Voters

- Write these down and prioritize them.
- Identify how your position and action plan for each issue brings value to the voters.

*Review the **Ground Game Wins Elections** course to learn about obtaining and filtering voter data, as well as identifying the highest priority voters for creating door knocking lists and mailing lists for both primary and general campaign season!*

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ANALYZE RESOURCES

Time (Volunteer Hours)

Time is the one asset you cannot get more of!

*Review the **Ground Game Wins Elections** course to learn about the importance of door-knocking, making specific assessment of available time, creating door-knocking lists and more!*

Money

Do not underestimate the costs involved. Analyze in a specific way what amount of money you can invest in your campaign.

- What specific amount of money can you put in?
- How much do you believe you can raise from family, friends and others in the community?

Knowing these specifics will help you decide how many voters you can target through mail after other expenses like yard signs, brochures, etc. have been taken into account.

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DEVELOP YOUR CAMPAIGN MESSAGE

Review the **Build Your Public Image: Campaign Messaging** course to learn the importance of showing leadership, name recognition, various messaging strategies, diversity in messaging methods, differentiating yourself, responding properly to attacks and so much more!

Elections are about choices. Make sure YOU define that choice for the voters: don't let your opponent define that choice.

The choice is a simple contrast between you and your opponent. Develop an over-arching campaign theme sentence that helps define that choice and answers two questions: WHO AM I? WHAT WILL I DO?

EXAMPLE: "I am an outsider, and I will make our community safe again."

Keep it simple and positive: constantly incorporate it into conversations with voters.

Beyond the over-arching theme, develop sub-messages for specific groups to help build your coalition.

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UNDERSTAND CAMPAIGN FINANCE REQUIREMENTS

The Michigan Campaign Finance Act regulates political activity, regulates campaign financing, restricts campaign contributions and expenditures, and so much more.

Do not break the law while running for office: be prepared to meet all MCFA requirements and deadlines.

Late filing fees can be substantial (and embarrassing)!

Review the **Campaign Finance for Candidates** course to learn the basics and identify the best resources for learning more.

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ESTABLISH FUNDRAISING GOALS & STRATEGY

Review the **Campaign Fundraising** course to learn about who to approach for funds, how to make “the ask” and various fundraising methods.

Start by reaching out to 50 - 100 people who know you - friends, family and other associates - and asking them to contribute \$50 - \$100 to your campaign.

Consider holding at least one fundraiser. Make a significant number of personal calls to those who know you, as well as conservative voters in your district, inviting them to attend.

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WRITE YOUR CAMPAIGN PLAN WITH SCHEDULE

Review the **Campaign Calendar** course for major deadlines that need to be prepared for and met by your campaign in both election and non-election years!

Map out your entire calendar between now and election day.

Schedule backwards from election day and notate the various deadlines you can't miss, such as filing deadlines, dates when absentee ballots are mailed, dates when early in-person voting begins, etc.

Identify any key community events or parades in your district. Put these on the calendar!

On each day that you have free time, assign specific campaign activity for yourself (and team members).

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ASSEMBLE THE CAMPAIGN TEAM

Campaign activities include:

- Campaign Management
- Campaign Finance
- Communications
- Grassroots
- Community Engagement and Fundraisers
- Election Day Operations
- Data & Information Technology
- Marketing
- Legal Advice

*Review the **Build a Strong Campaign Team** course to learn more about the various activities you and your team members must be able to handle efficiently and effectively, and how you should structure, train and communicate with your team to help them help you win!*