

# Launching Your Campaign

Ready-to-Run

Center for American Woman and Politics

March 2025

- Later
- Tomorrow
- Today
- NOW

*Presented by,*

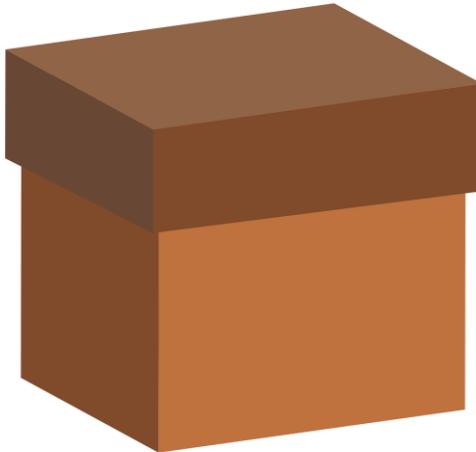
Eva M. Pusateri

Founder & President

Expert  
Communications  
& Training



**1 - \$150.00**



**2 - \$140.00**



**3 - \$130.00**



I've looked in the window of political campaigns and I can't teach you how to run a political campaign.

1



I've read comments online about political campaigns. Now I'm an armchair quarterback. I can teach you something I know.

2

As a national campaign consultant for over three decades, I won campaigns and elected people to office at all levels of government while also serving as a top requested national campaign trainer.

My passion is helping women level the campaign playing field and win their elections to public office.

3

1992

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## "Year of the Woman": A Note of Caution

Irwin N. Gertzog, Braun Professor of  
Political Science, Allegheny College  
Ruth B. Mandel, Director, CAWP

The last primary is over and the slates are set for November 3rd. It's official: 1992 is a banner year for women candidates, with record numbers winning major party nominations for the U.S. Senate (11) and the House of Representatives (108). The jump in women's House nominations is more than three times greater than any previous increase. Over one third of the nominees are vying for open seats, where newcomers' chances are best. Organizations raising money for women candidates have seen unprecedented growth in membership and dollars. Indeed 1992 has been dubbed "the year of the woman."

Observers of women's political progress recognize this label from the 70s, 80s, and even 1990. We'll probably hear it again. Admittedly, the "year of the woman" tag

# NJ Officeholders by Gender

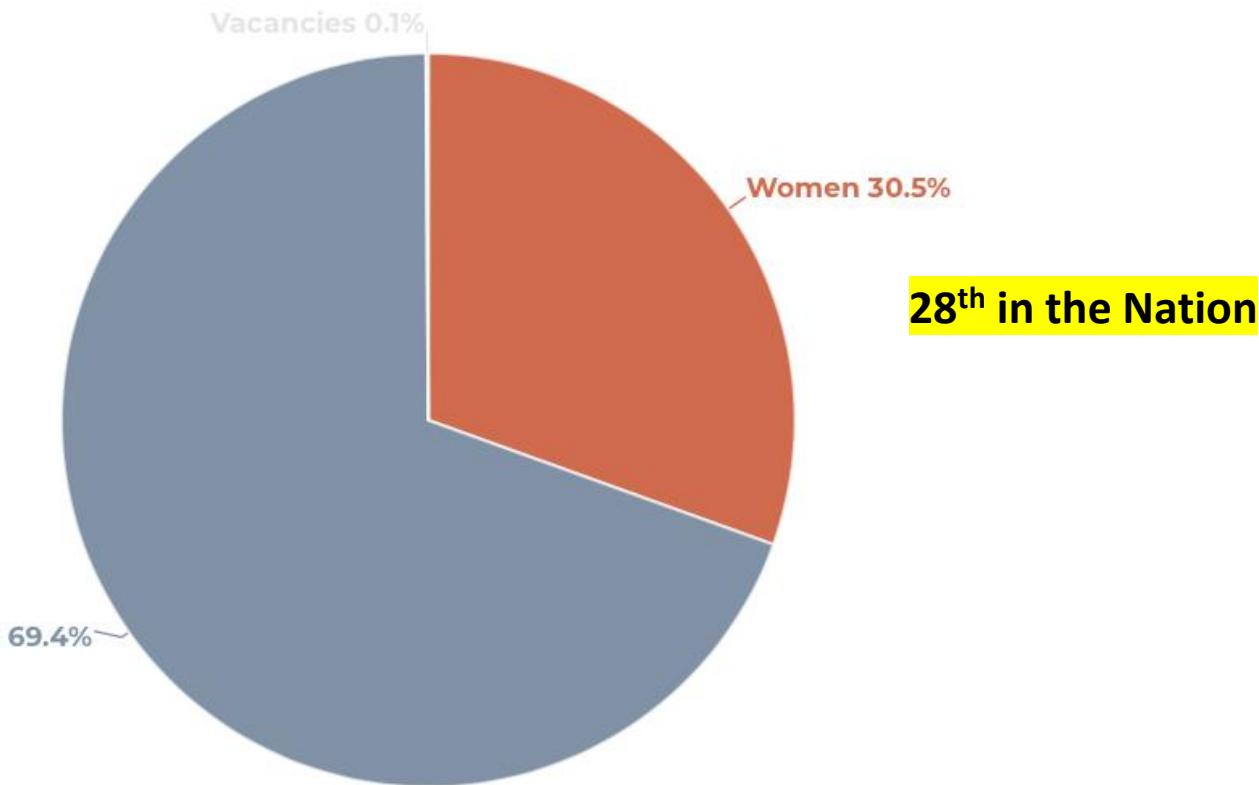


2024 Gender Breakdown

ows/dropdown below to view by levels of office.



Overall





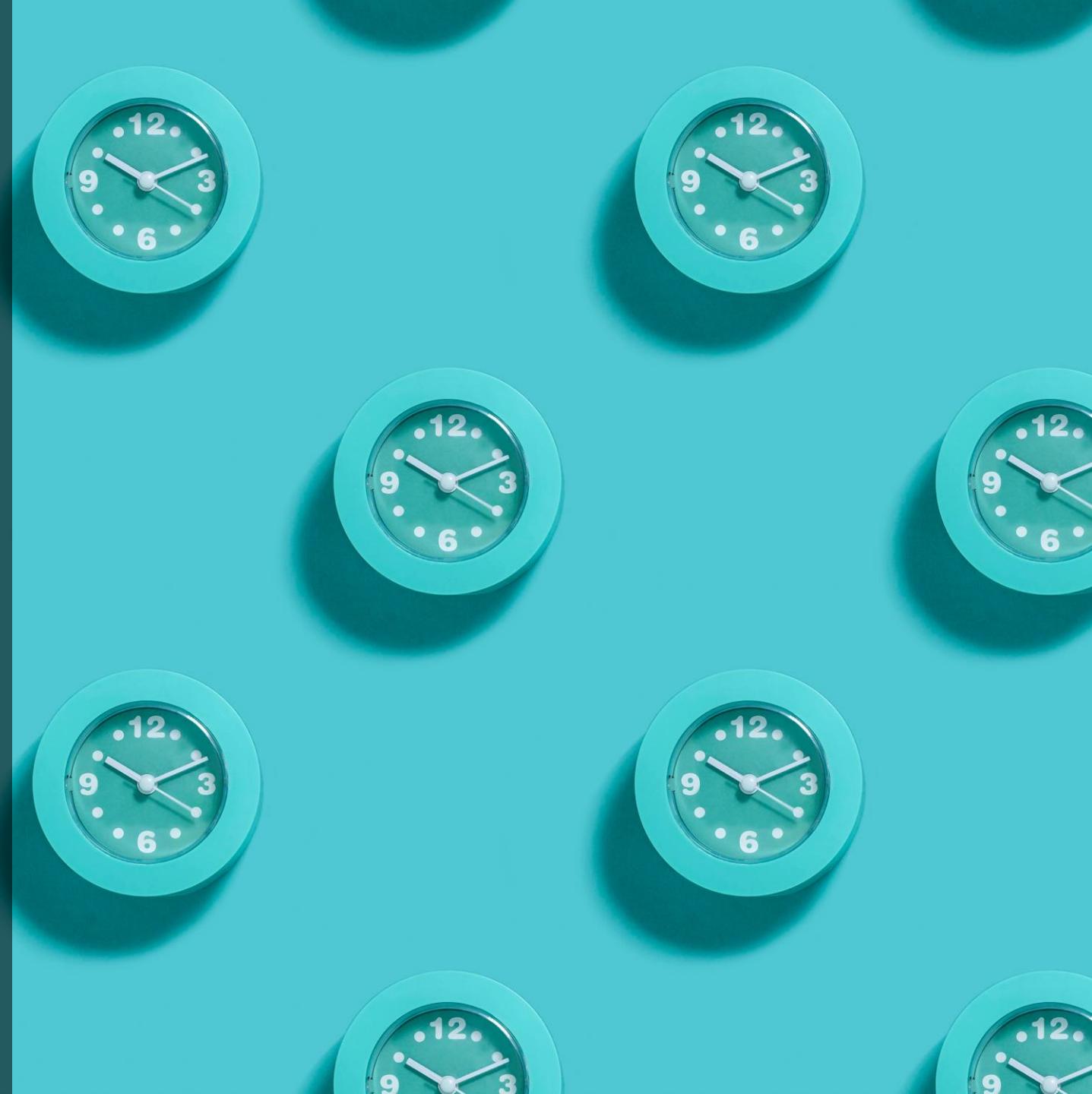
# What are the Qualifications to Run Elected Office?

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A campaign is a big sales and marketing effort where you must “close” all the sales ~~in one day~~ **Before and On ELECTION DAY.**





# Launching Your Campaign:

C





# Launching Your Campaign:

Capture

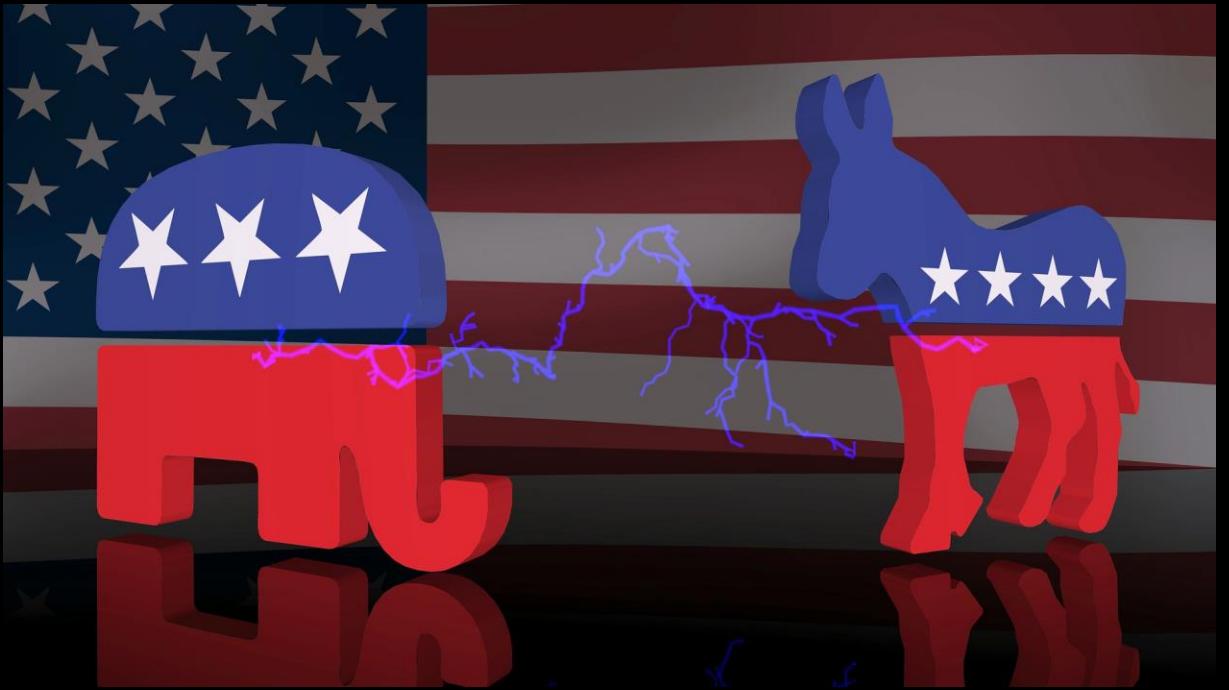
**Capture/identify** what is happening in general and what is happening close around you and your campaign.



1) Political Environment  
2) Demographic Environment  
3) Electoral Environment

Preparing to Launch Your Campaign

## 1) Political Environment



What is happening politically – and does it matter to your race?

# Direction of Country

President Trump Job Approval | Congressional Job Approval | Favorability of U.S. Political Leaders

| POLLSTER                 | DATE              | N       | RIGHT DIRECTION | WRONG TRACK | SPREAD             |
|--------------------------|-------------------|---------|-----------------|-------------|--------------------|
| <b>RCP Average</b>       | <b>1/27 - 3/4</b> | —       | <b>42.4</b>     | <b>51.4</b> | <b>Spread -9.0</b> |
| <u>Reuters/Ipsos</u>     | 3/3 - 3/4         | 1174 A  |                 |             |                    |
| <u>Rasmussen Reports</u> | 2/23 - 2/27       | 2033 LV | 45              | 50          | Spread -5          |
| <u>NPR/PBS/Marist</u>    | 2/24 - 2/26       | 1533 RV | 45              | 54          | Spread -9          |
| <u>Economist/YouGov</u>  | 2/23 - 2/25       | 1444 RV | 41              | 49          | Spread -8          |
| <u>Harvard-Harris</u>    | 2/19 - 2/20       | 2443 RV | 42              | 48          | Spread -6          |
| <u>Marquette</u>         | 1/27 - 2/5        | 1063 A  | 38              | 62          | Spread -24         |
| <u>Emerson</u>           | 1/27 - 1/28       | 1000 RV | 52              | 48          | Spread +4          |



RealClearPolitics Poll Average

51.4 Wrong Track -9.0

42.4 Right Direction

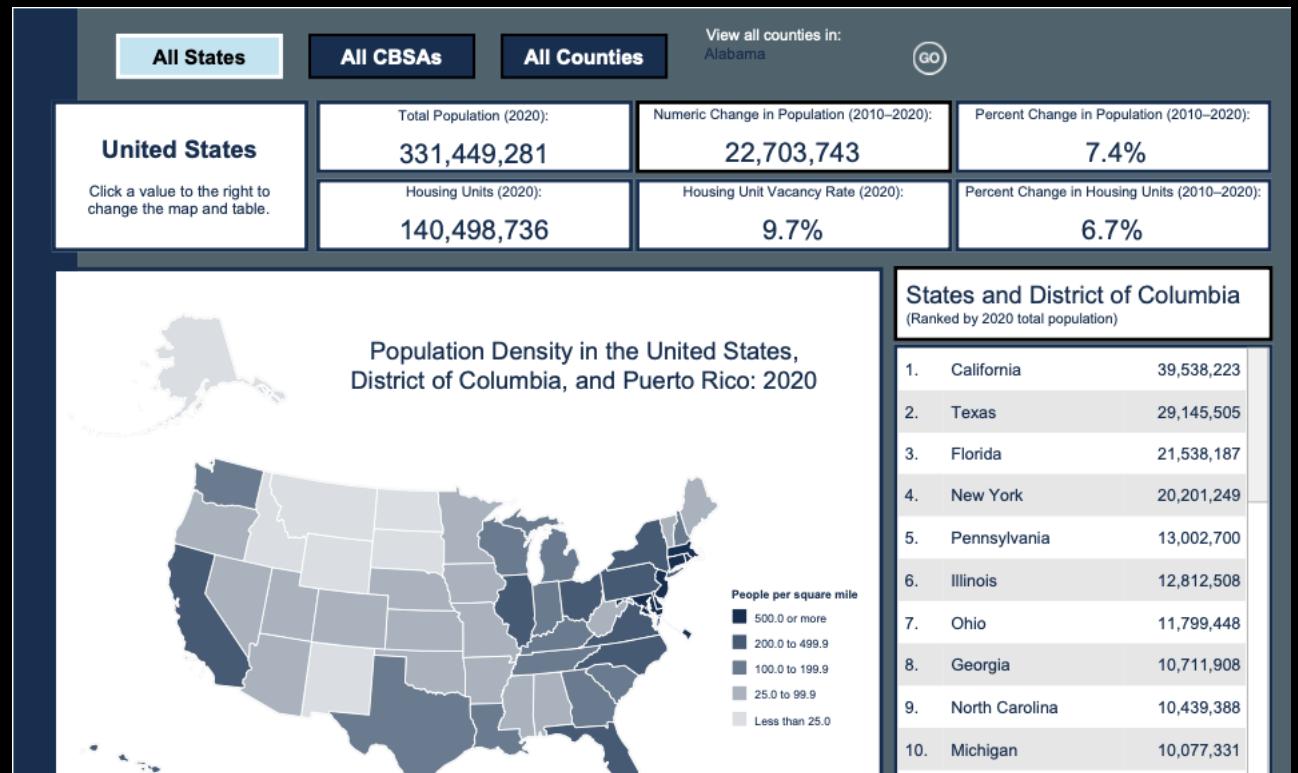


2025: The Economy

What's happening in NJ?

## 2) Demographic Environment

(Census.gov)



Search

BROWSE BY TOPIC

EXPLORE DATA

LIBRARY

SURVEYS/ PROGRAMS

INFORMATION FOR...

FIND A CODE

ABOUT US

Age and Sex

Families and Living Arrangements

Income and Poverty

Race

Business and Economy

Geography

International Trade

Redistricting

Education

Health

Population

Research

Emergency Management

Hispanic Origin

Population Estimates

Voting and Registration

Employment

Housing

Public Sector

A - Z

### 3) Electoral Environment

1/1/25

#### Statewide Voter Registration Summary

| County             | UNA              | DEM              | REP              | CNV           | CON           | GRE           | LIB           | NAT          | RFP          | SSP          | Total            |
|--------------------|------------------|------------------|------------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|---------------|--------------|--------------|--------------|------------------|
| Atlantic           | 75,079           | 69,492           | 60,556           | 499           | 467           | 389           | 870           | 203          | 71           | 295          | 207,921          |
| Bergen             | 270,730          | 256,970          | 162,148          | 1,196         | 985           | 1,151         | 2,173         | 403          | 108          | 578          | 696,442          |
| Burlington         | 128,081          | 143,503          | 98,118           | 730           | 568           | 656           | 1,553         | 268          | 73           | 387          | 373,937          |
| Camden             | 140,932          | 183,759          | 70,368           | 972           | 876           | 797           | 1,657         | 424          | 105          | 534          | 400,424          |
| Cape May           | 23,254           | 18,110           | 33,597           | 163           | 138           | 109           | 312           | 56           | 10           | 74           | 75,823           |
| Cumberland         | 39,802           | 31,921           | 25,019           | 319           | 402           | 198           | 430           | 164          | 42           | 215          | 98,512           |
| Essex              | 223,826          | 304,139          | 65,929           | 979           | 1,037         | 844           | 1,386         | 476          | 170          | 655          | 599,441          |
| Gloucester         | 76,534           | 83,808           | 64,385           | 498           | 367           | 396           | 1,136         | 151          | 41           | 290          | 227,606          |
| Hudson             | 150,624          | 222,272          | 51,927           | 1,039         | 956           | 935           | 1,625         | 415          | 129          | 618          | 430,540          |
| Hunterdon          | 33,631           | 31,274           | 44,214           | 147           | 109           | 138           | 414           | 45           | 13           | 68           | 110,053          |
| Mercer             | 105,270          | 120,603          | 43,286           | 655           | 621           | 557           | 969           | 311          | 56           | 449          | 272,777          |
| Middlesex          | 236,002          | 242,795          | 107,322          | 1,338         | 1,265         | 1,108         | 1,920         | 506          | 140          | 811          | 593,207          |
| Monmouth           | 201,508          | 141,305          | 164,050          | 1,009         | 764           | 851           | 2,105         | 349          | 70           | 410          | 512,421          |
| Morris             | 140,274          | 119,561          | 139,843          | 622           | 449           | 657           | 1,537         | 217          | 48           | 337          | 403,545          |
| Ocean              | 188,214          | 98,824           | 195,272          | 1,204         | 892           | 802           | 1,963         | 338          | 92           | 473          | 488,074          |
| Passaic            | 128,754          | 132,031          | 77,540           | 1,002         | 794           | 713           | 1,199         | 373          | 104          | 483          | 342,993          |
| Salem              | 18,972           | 14,712           | 16,086           | 182           | 95            | 101           | 290           | 43           | 9            | 89           | 50,579           |
| Somerset           | 103,105          | 92,555           | 66,443           | 428           | 336           | 462           | 981           | 155          | 42           | 233          | 264,740          |
| Sussex             | 41,638           | 26,916           | 51,821           | 344           | 179           | 279           | 735           | 96           | 23           | 131          | 122,162          |
| Union              | 143,768          | 179,359          | 66,190           | 844           | 785           | 586           | 1,198         | 354          | 106          | 467          | 393,657          |
| Warren             | 27,938           | 24,022           | 37,467           | 260           | 199           | 221           | 588           | 88           | 22           | 108          | 90,913           |
| <b>Grand Total</b> | <b>2,497,936</b> | <b>2,537,931</b> | <b>1,641,581</b> | <b>14,430</b> | <b>12,284</b> | <b>11,950</b> | <b>25,041</b> | <b>5,435</b> | <b>1,474</b> | <b>7,705</b> | <b>6,755,767</b> |





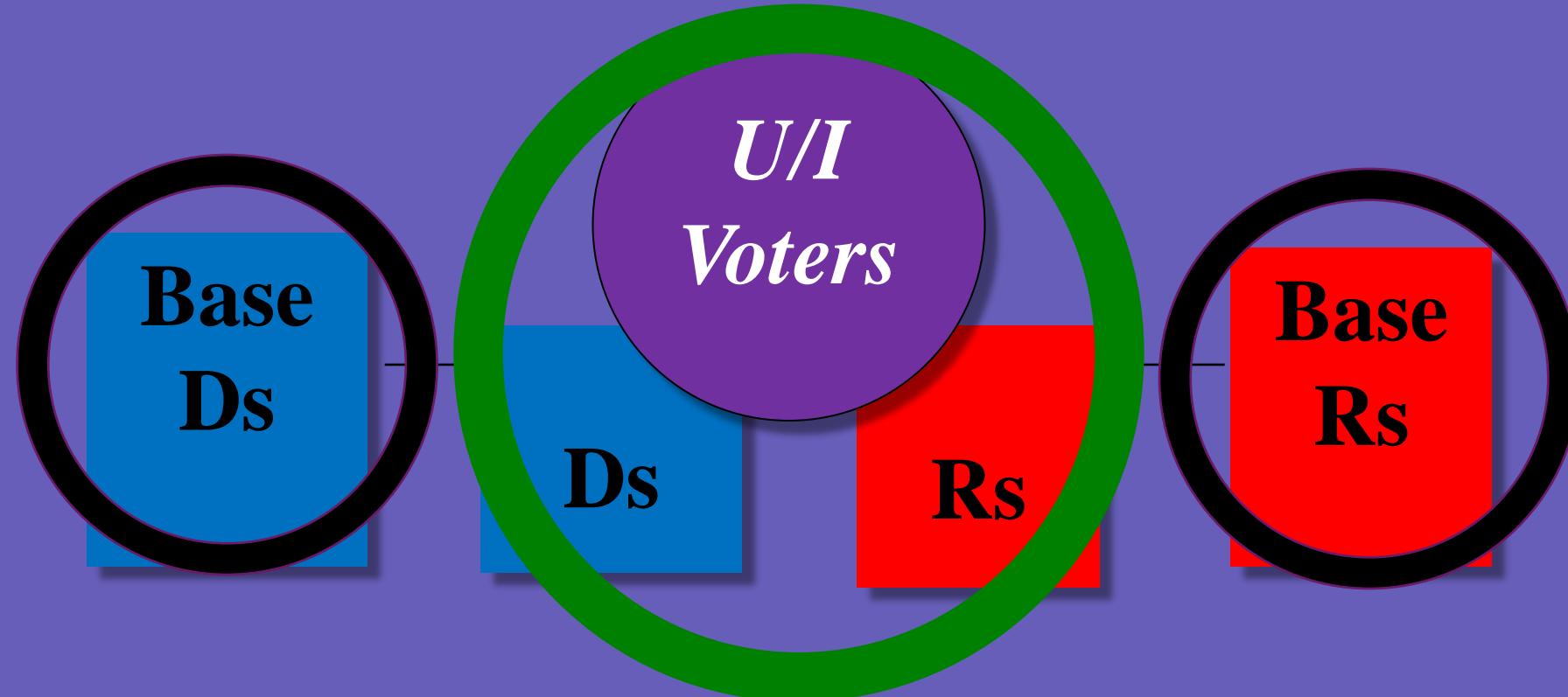
# Launching Your Campaign:

Capture

Count

**Count** the votes and know how many you need to win = *Electoral Environment*.

# Electoral Environment



## Types of Elections

### By Year

- Presidential year
- Gubernatorial year
- Odd/Off year

### By Election

- General Election
- Primary Election
- Special Election

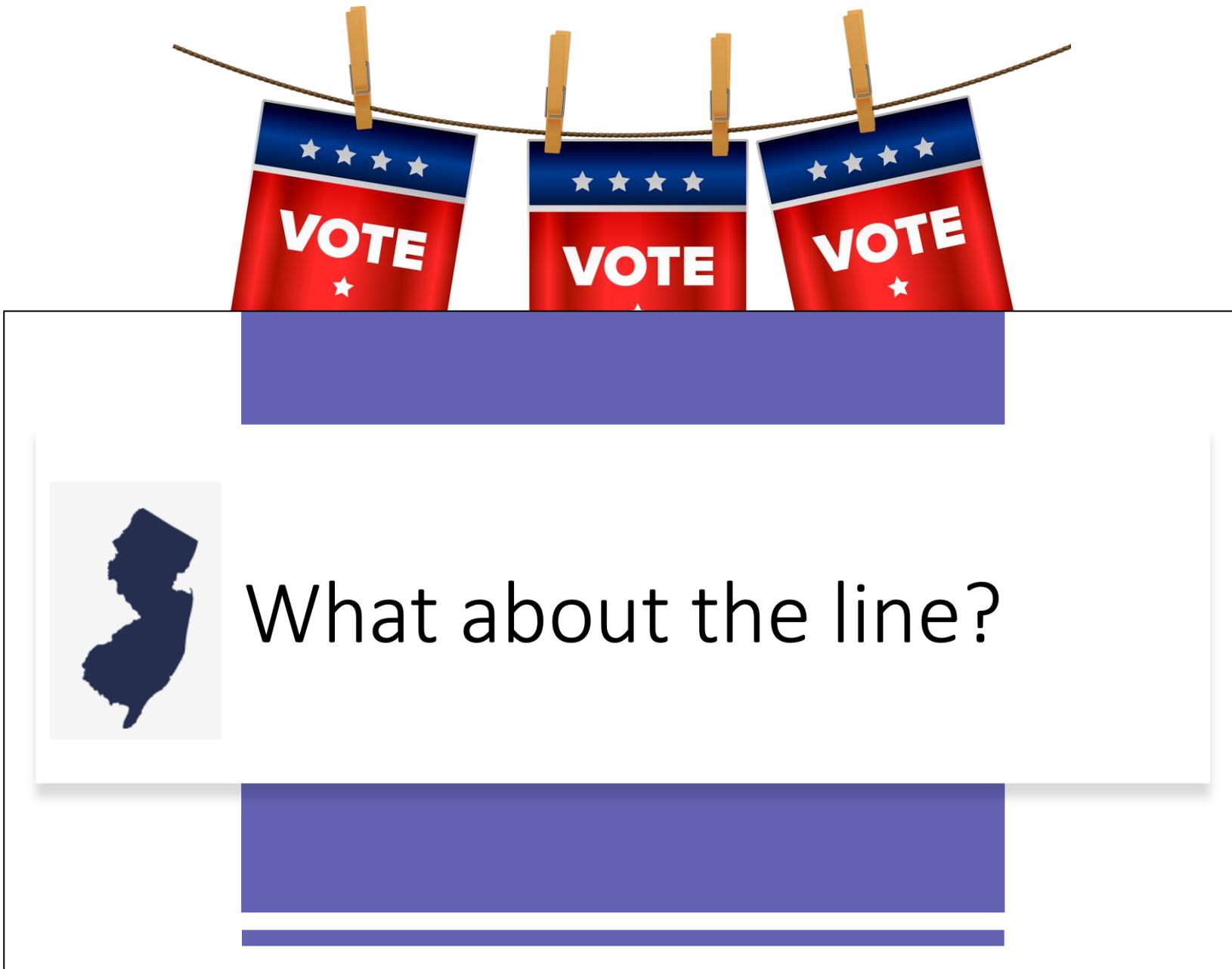
Determine the Ways People Can Vote in Your State.

### By Mail

- Absentee
- Permanent Absentee
- Overseas / Military Voter

### In Person

- Early Voting
- Election Day



# Targeting

- Know who is *with you* no matter what
- Know who is *against you* know matter what
- Know who votes and who doesn't
- Know your election cycle
- Focus only on those who matter

| EXAMPLE                  |                               |
|--------------------------|-------------------------------|
| Population:              | 100,000 people                |
| Registered Voters (2/3): | 66,000 voters                 |
| Turnout at 50%           | 33,000 voters                 |
| <b>Magic Number</b>      | <b>16,501 targeted voters</b> |

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What are the two  
most important jobs  
of a candidate?





# Launching Your Campaign:

Capture

Count

Communicate

**Communicate** the one or two things you want voters to think about when they go to vote = your message.



**People want leadership  
Mr. President.**

**And in the absence of a  
leader, they'll listen to  
anyone who crawls up to  
the microphone.**





**Us** = Good  
(on the issues)

**Them** = Bad  
(on the issues)

# Message Grid



## Issues/Words to Avoid

## Instead Talk About

|   | Issues/Words to Avoid   | Instead Talk About                      |
|---|---|---|
| → | Voters  | Taxpayers, Families, Seniors            |
| → | Schools / School Buildings  | Our Children's Education                |
| → | Your Pet Peeve Issues   | What People Care About                  |
| → | Don't try to educate people on the electoral or legislative processes | Your message                            |
| → | I am woman  | Because of my experiences as a woman... |
| → | The office you are running for  | The mission / your why                  |
| → | Negative Personal Attacks   | Documented Issues                       |
| → | Opponent's Attack on You  | Your Message                            |



# Launching Your Campaign:

Capture

Count

Communicate

Connect

**Connect:** Connect with voters on what they care about, not what you want to talk about.

## Likeability Factor:

**Voters do not “care what you know”...  
Until they “know that you care.”**



## Winning Message

The one or two things  
you want voters to be  
thinking about when they  
go to vote.

(And it better be on what  
they care about.)





# Launching Your Campaign:

Capture

Count

Communicate

Connect

Convince

Identify your supporters,  
**Convince** them to vote for you.

# Grassroots Neighbor-to- Neighbor

**Time** -- schedule from Election Day backwards

**Talent** -- paid and volunteer staff

**Target** -- Voters

- Type of year
- Type of election
- Type of vote

Have goals and metrics.



# Launching Your Campaign:

Capture

Count

Communicate

Connect

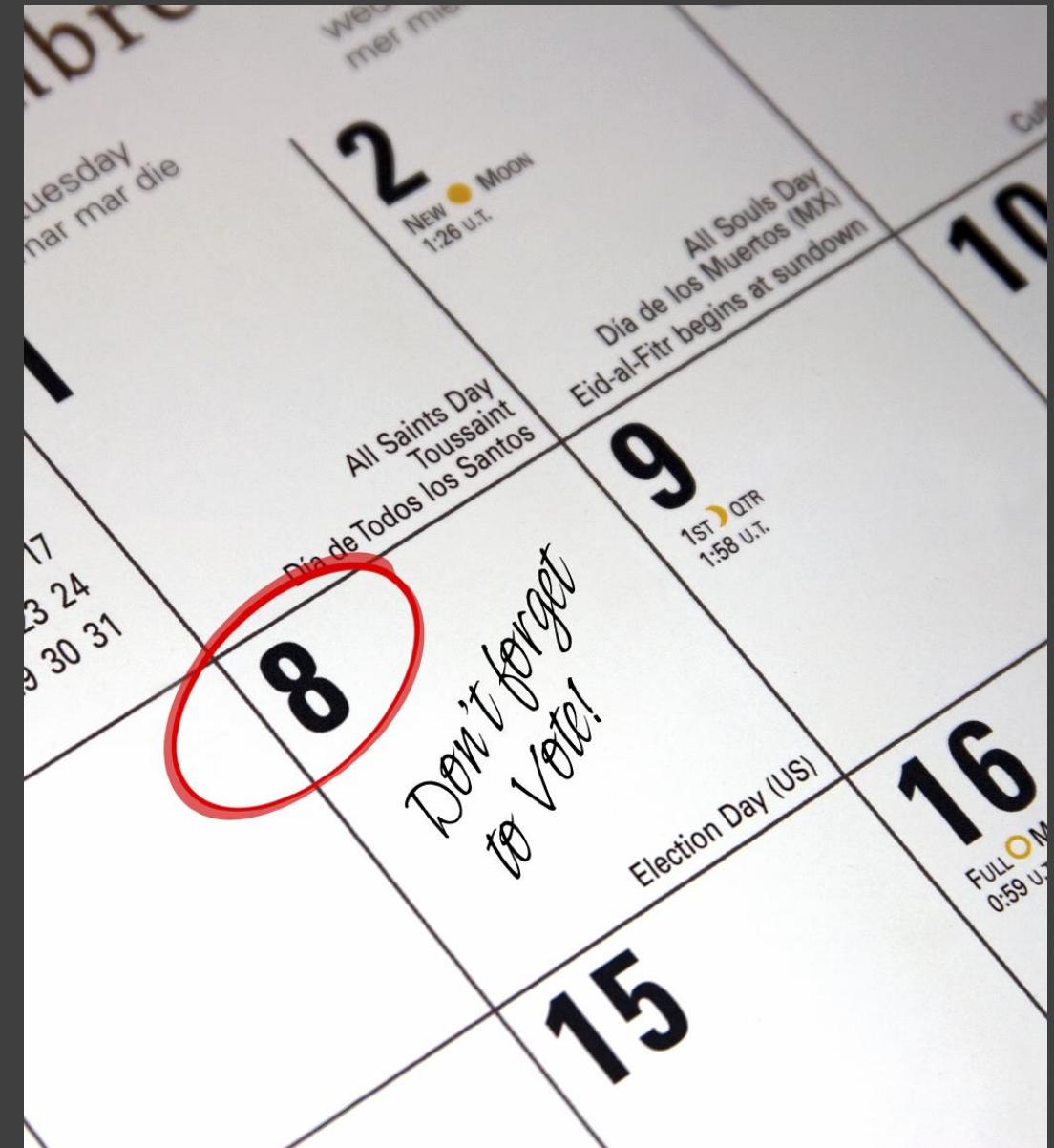
Convince

Complete

**Complete** your efforts by  
making sure your voters  
“Get Out to Vote.”

# GOTV - 72 Hour Program

**Exactly** How Many Votes Do  
You Need to Win and Where  
and How Are You Going to Get  
Them/Make Sure They Vote?



# Winning Your Campaign:

Capture

Count

Communicate

Connect

Convince

Complete

Control





GOAL • PLAN • SUCCESS

“A goal without a plan is a wish.”  
- Antoine de Saint-Exupery

# The Campaign Plan

A

B

- Strategy:
  - (Framework Parts I & II):
    - Who?
    - Why?
    - Where?
- Tactics:
  - (Framework Parts III – VIII):
    - How?
    - When?



# Part I: Strategic Plan and Message Development

- A. Theme and Message
  - 1. Theme and Message Development Grid
- B. Strategic Plan Overview
  - 1. Number of Votes Needed to Win
  - 2. Political and Demographic Environments
  - 3. Key Strategic Assumptions
  - 4. Candidate Strengths and Weaknesses
    - a. Our Candidate, Our Issues
    - b. The Opposition, Their Issues

## Part II: The Battlefield

- A. Number of Votes Needed to Win -- (*You Must Remember This Number, Use it with Major Donors*)
  - 1. Vote Goals by County
  - 2. Goals by Municipality
  - 3. Goals by Precincts/Voting Districts
- B. Four-Year Vote History and Expected Voter Turnout
- C. Census Data (complete census report and update)

# Part III: The Organization

- A. Organizational Flowchart
  - 1. Staff Jobs and Responsibilities
  - 2. Consultant Roles and Responsibilities
  - 3. Chain of Command and Decision-Making Structure
  - 4. Candidate's Family
- B. Campaign Headquarter(s)
- C. Campaign Personnel and Contact Numbers



## Part IV: Grassroots Field Operation and Neighbor-To-Neighbor Program

- A. Door-To-Door Program, Timeline and Goals
  - 1. Candidate
  - 2. Volunteers
- B. Phone calls Timeline and Goals
  - 1. Candidate
  - 2. Volunteers
  - 3. Paid Phones
- C. Neighbor Outreach Program Timeline and Goals
  - 1. Local Elected Leaders' Endorsement Letters
  - 2. Neighbor Endorsement Post Cards
  - 3. Coalition Endorsements
- D. Get Out the Vote (GOTV) Timeline
  - 1. Election Day Plan

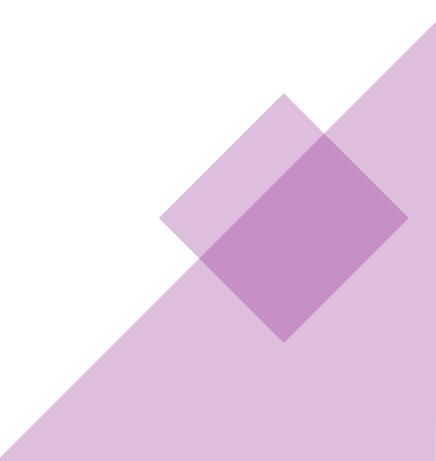




## Part V: Voter Contact – Tactics and Communications

### A. Tactics

1. Voter Registration
2. Voter Contact and Targeting
  - a. Absentee Ballots
  - b. Early Voting
  - c. Overseas and Military Voters
  - d. Election Day Voters
3. Coalition Building and Outreach
4. Endorsements
  - a. Politicians/Political
  - b. Civic, Business, and Community
  - c. News Organizations
5. Yard Signs and Billboards
6. External Organizations' Questionnaires



# Part V: Voter Contact – Tactics and Communications

(continued)

- B. Communications Plan
  - 1. Schedules
    - a. Earned Media
    - b. Paid Media
    - c. Owned/Social Media
    - d. Debates
  - 2. Print Media Relations – Research and Targeting
    - a. Earned Print Media Lists and Plans
    - b. Paid Print Media Lists and Plans
  - 3. Electronic Media Relations – Research and Targeting
    - a. Earned Media, Television (Network and Cable) and Radio Lists and Plans
    - b. Paid Electronic Media Lists and Plan
  - 4. Voter Persuasion Direct Mail
    - a. Targeting, Quantity and Plan

# Part V: Voter Contact – Tactics and Communications

(continued)

5. Paid Phones Plan (Integration with Volunteer Phones)
  - a. Phone Calls
  - b. Tele-Town Hall Meetings
  - c. Texting
  - d. Virtual Meetings
6. Online Communications
  - a. Website
  - b. E-Newsletters
  - c. Social Media
7. Political Newsletter, Podcasts and Talk Radio Host Programs Plan



# Part VI: Finance, Compliance and Fundraising

## A. Fundraising Plan

1. Candidate's Calls (Major Donors, etc.)
2. Finance Committee
3. Events, Programs and Schedules
4. Political Party Support
5. PAC (Political Action Committee)  
Programs and Lists
6. Direct Mail Fundraising Plan
7. Website
8. E Newsletter/Internet

## B. Campaign Budget and Spending Plan

1. Finance Law Compliance



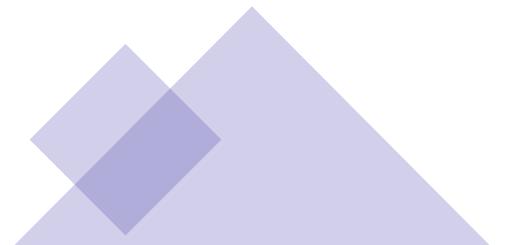
# Part VII: Scheduling

- A. Types of Events to be Targeted and Arranged
  - 1. Geographic
  - 2. Issues
- B. Traveling Aids/Advance Staff
- C. Full Calendar of Events



## Part VIII: Research

- A. The Candidates
  - 1. Our Candidate / Our Issues
  - 2. The Opposition / Their Issues
- B. Surveys/Polling
  - 1. Benchmark
  - 2. Tracking
  - 3. Focus Groups





On Election Day,  
if voters are thinking about  
the one or two things your opponent wants  
them to be thinking about –  
***YOU LOSE!***

On Election Day,  
if voters are thinking about  
the one or two things you want  
them to be thinking about --  
***YOU WIN!***



## Women Candidates



# Women and Men Are Perceived Differently:

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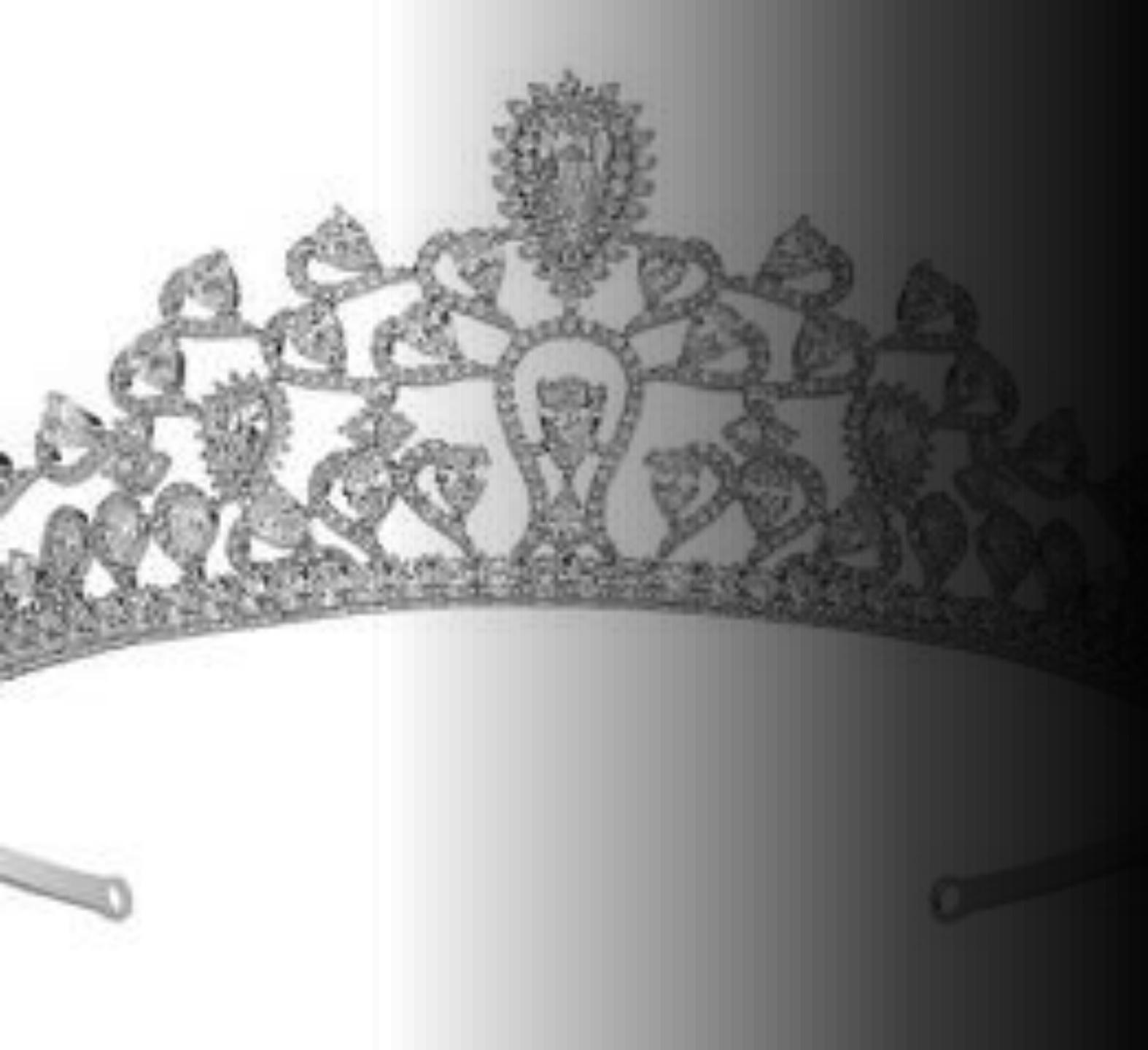
Men = leaders, tough, get results

Women = caring, ethical, honest





**Heidi vs Howard**



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## Tiara Syndrome

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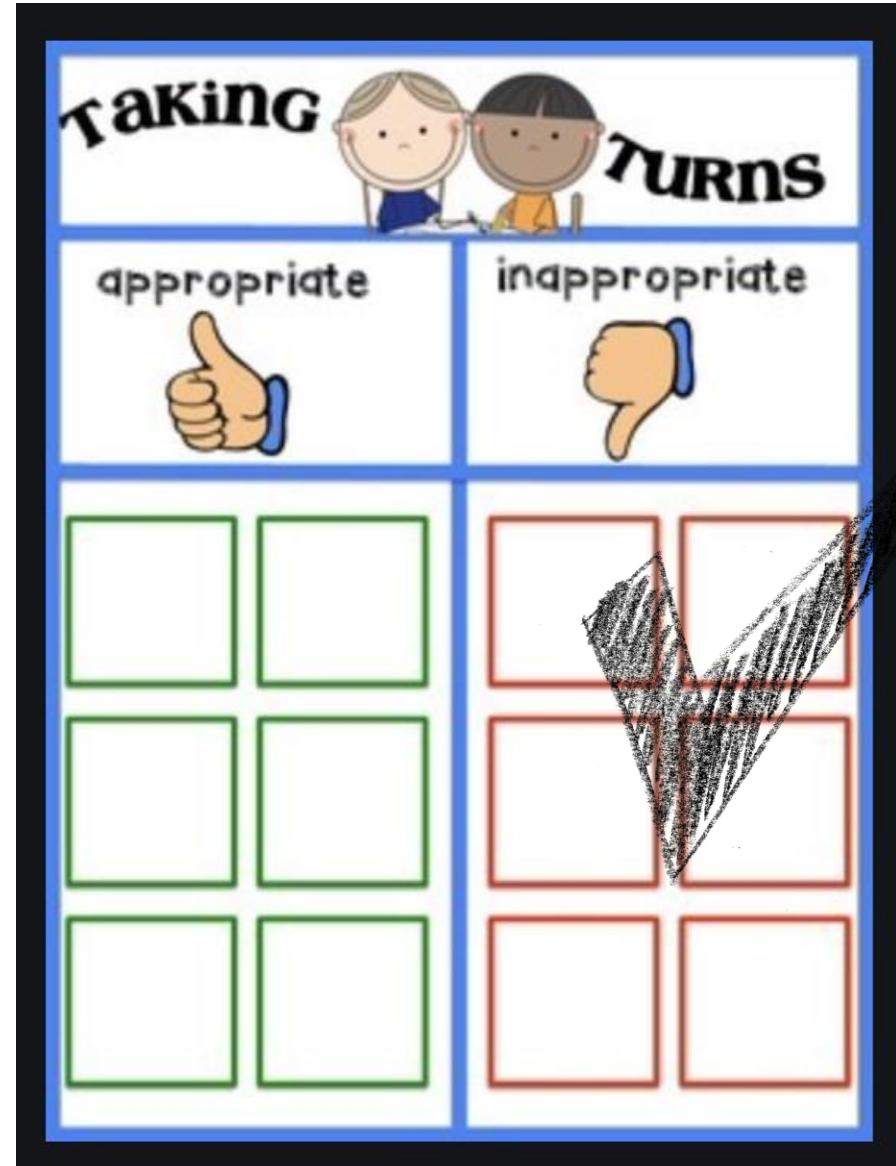
*Carol Frohlinger and Deborah Kolb, founders of Negotiating Women, Inc.*



Men know they can do the job of an elected official.

Women think about whether or not they can.

# It's Not Your Turn



A photograph of three women of different ethnicities and hair types (curly, blonde, straight) looking directly at the camera with expressions of surprise or shock. They are wearing casual clothing and necklaces.

Beware the Glass Cliff

Studies Show -  
Shutting Down  
Inappropriate  
Statements /  
Questions Works  
In Your Favor

## Timbs and Converse? Kamala Harris sports Timberland boots after wearing Chuck Taylor All- Stars

Kelly Tyko, USA TODAY Updated 12 hours ago

[Kamala Harris](#)

Add Topic +



[Kamala Harris: 5 things to know about Joe Biden's running mate](#)

Joe Biden made history when he chose Kamala Harris as his running mate.

- Shut Down the Question, Not the Questioner
- ABC:
  - A = Acknowledge it or shut it down
  - B = Bridge to what you want to talk about
  - C = Communicate your message



## **Mikie Sherrill for New Jersey**

**U.S. Naval Academy graduate, Navy  
helicopter pilot, former federal prosecutor,  
wife, and mother of four kids – Mikie Sherrill**



## **Mikie Sherrill for New Jersey**

**U.S. Naval Academy graduate, Navy  
helicopter pilot, former federal prosecutor,  
wife, and mother of four kids – Mikie Sherrill**

Don't Run as a “Woman” Candidate –  
But do Share Your Story as a Woman

Now more  
than ever  
there are  
groups to  
support  
women!





Launch  
Your  
Campaign

- 1) **Start building “your” database.**
- 2) **Check your digital footprint.**
- 3) **Write a political bio / label yourself.**
- 4) **Work on your public speaking skills.**
- 5) **Determine the office you want to serve in / where can you make the biggest difference.**

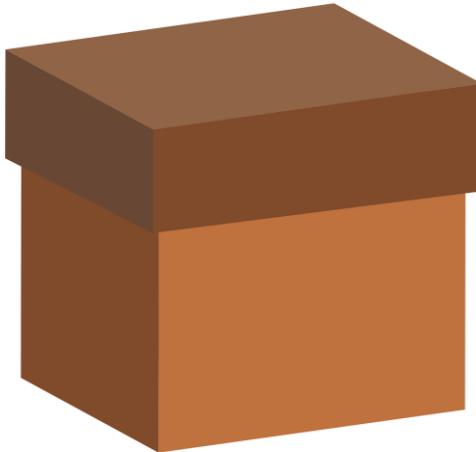


- 6) Determine if you should talk to your party.
- 7) Start raising money (after filing appropriate paperwork)
- 8) Write a campaign plan
  - a) Determine how many votes you need to win
  - b) Determine how much money you need to raise
- 9) Make an official campaign announcement
- 10) Run! And don't stop until the polls close!

Launch  
Your  
Campaign



1



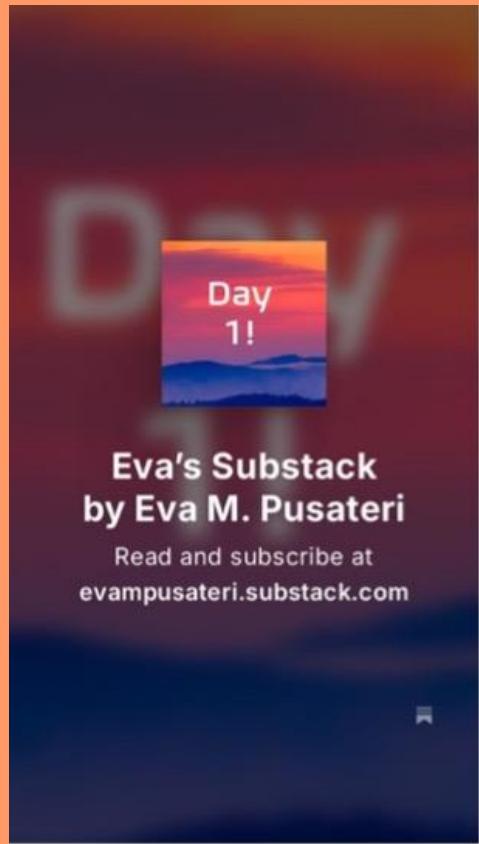
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3



Who Here is Qualified  
to Run for Office?

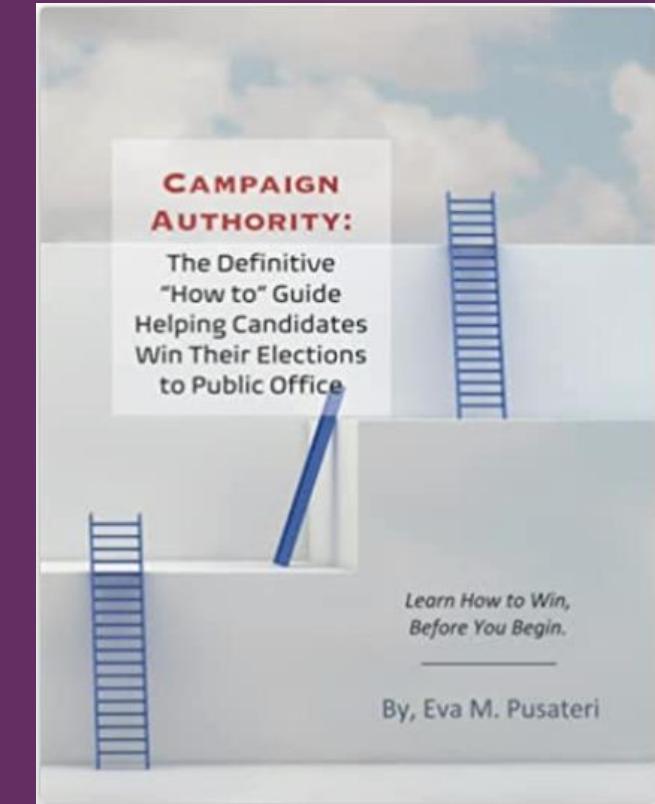


# Thank you.

**Eva M. Pusateri**  
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Communications  
& Training**



Available at Ready to Run  
(\$20)  
and on Amazon (\$25)