

What Women Candidates Need to Know

January 2021

Overview

- Share some top takeaways from the 2020 elections.
- Provide skill-building information around public opinion research on women candidates in the areas of:
 - Electability
 - Balancing qualifications and likeability
 - Advantages Democratic and Republican women have as candidates
 - Managing and addressing crises
 - Responding to sexist media coverage
 - How to be resilient and win in the future if you lose the first time

What Happened in 2020

- There were 6 major party women candidates in the Democratic primary for President in 2020.
 - Senator Elizabeth Warren (D-MA)
 - Senator Kristen Gillibrand (D-NY)
 - Senator Kamala Harris (D-CA)
 - Representative Tulsi Gabbard (D-HI)
 - Marianne Williamson
 - Senator Amy Klobuchar (D-MN)
- Vice President Kamala Harris was the third woman vice presidential nominee from a major U.S. party and she is serving as our first woman, South Asian woman, and Black woman vice president.



<https://www.usnews.com/elections/kamala-harris>

What Happened in 2020

- **A record-breaking number of women ran as candidates for Congress, surpassing the surge in 2018.**
 - 60 women filed to run for the U.S. Senate in 2020 compared to 53 who ran in 2018. We saw a slight increase in Democratic women running for the Senate (37 women candidates in 2020, 31 in 2018) and about the same number of Republican women run for the Senate (23 in 2020, 22 in 2018).
 - 583 women filed to run for the U.S. House of Representatives in 2020, a dramatic increase since 2018 when 476 women filed to run. Differently than the Senate races, the same number of Democratic women ran for congress in 2020 as in 2018 (356) while **we saw a record-breaking surge of Republican women running** (227 Republican women filed to run in 2020 compared to 120 in 2018. This broke the record of Republican women running for the House which was set in 2010 at 130 candidates).
- **The Republicans flipped 10 U.S. House seats with women candidates in the 2020 elections.** This is an increase from 2018 when 0 U.S. House seats were flipped from Democrat to Republican by women.*
- **Resultingly, a new record-breaking number of women will serve in the 117th Congress.**
 - 118 women will serve in the House (89 D, 29 R) including 48 women of color.
 - 24 women will serve in the U.S. Senate (16 D, 8 R) including 4 women of color.

What Happened in 2020

- **A record-breaking number (94) of women will also serve statewide executive office in 2021.**
 - 51 of the incoming women statewide executive office holders are Democrats and 41 are Republicans.
 - 17 are women of color, equivalent to the record set in 2019.
 - 9 will serve as Governors.



Molly Gray, Lieutenant Governor-Elect, VT, Elected in November 2020



Christi Jacobsen, Secretary of State, MT, Elected in November 2020



Anna Tovar, Corporation Commissioner, AZ, Elected in November 2020

Source: <https://cawp.rutgers.edu/election2020-results-tracker>

Images from: <https://www.mollyforvermont.com/meet-molly>;
https://ballotpedia.org/Anna_Tovar; https://ballotpedia.org/Christi_Jacobsen

History Making Continues



Kamala Harris (D): Serving as the first woman, South Asian woman, and Black woman vice president.



Cori Bush (D): First Black woman to represent Missouri in Congress for MO-01.



Sarah McBride (D): Elected to the Delaware Senate, she will be the first openly transgender state senator and the highest-ranking transgender official in the US.



Marilyn Strickland (D): Former Mayor of Tacoma, Washington, she is the first Korean-American woman ever to be elected to Congress and is the first Black woman to represent Washington State at the federal level.



Deb Haaland (D): New Mexico elected all women of color to the House for the first time in the state's history: Deb Haaland, Yvette Herrell, and Teresa Leger Fernandez. Subsequently, Deb Haaland was appointed as Secretary of the Interior by the Biden Administration, making her the first Native American woman to serve in the role.



Cynthia Lummis (R): A former congresswoman for the state, she will be the first woman to serve in the Senate for Wyoming.

Some Key Takeaways for Women Candidates from 2020

- **We saw many women governors and mayors take strong stances and actions when responding to COVID-19.** When continuing to communicate with voters about the pandemic, it is important to emphasize that in order to get the economy on track, states need to mitigate the public health risks of the virus. This will help to respond to criticism about shutting down the economy.
- We saw a record-breaking number of Republican women run for the House of Representatives. If this trend continues, **we are going to see more woman vs. woman races in general elections.** It is important to keep this in mind as gender dynamics may play out differently as opposed to races we have studied where women run against men.
- The economy was an incredibly important issue in the 2020 elections, and it is going to continue to be as we face the economic fallout from COVID-19. It is also an issue that Democratic and woman candidates tend to be weaker on. **It is imperative for candidates, both Democrats and Republicans, to develop a strong economic message and plan that resonates with voters going forward.**
- With more women candidates running in the Democratic primary for president, sexist attacks that worked in 2016 were not as prevalent. However, people were aggressive on social media vis a vis woman candidates.



What Women Candidates Need to Know: Electability



READY WILLING & ELECTABLE

Women Running for
Executive Office

BL BARBARA LEE
FAMILY FOUNDATION



LRP LAKE RESEARCH PARTNERS **Bellwether** RESEARCH & CONSULTING

Bellwether
RESEARCH & CONSULTING

BL BARBARA LEE
FAMILY FOUNDATION

LRP LAKE RESEARCH PARTNERS
Strategy Precision Impact

KEY TAKEAWAY 1:

The idea that women candidates aren't as electable as their male counterparts is a myth.

Across candidate profiles tested, all of the hypothetical women candidates win or tie their head-to-head ballots against a straight white man of the opposite party.

	% Voting for Woman	% Voting for Man	% Undecided	Margin
Deborah Williams, a Black woman and Republican	49	33	18	17
Teresa Garcia, a Latina and Republican	46	37	18	9
Cynthia Smith, a white woman and Democrat	47	39	14	8
Deborah Williams, a Black woman and Democrat	44	37	19	7
Sherry Lee, an Asian American woman and Democrat	46	40	13	6
Karen Davis, a lesbian white woman and Democrat	45	39	16	6
Cynthia Smith, a white woman and Republican	43	39	18	4
Sherry Lee, an Asian American woman and Republican	44	40	16	3
Teresa Garcia, a Latina and Democrat	42	40	18	2
Karen Davis, a lesbian white woman and Republican	34	34	31	0



KEY TAKEAWAY 2:

Voters want women candidates for governor to be action-oriented.

No matter the hypothetical woman candidate tested, the top traits voters identify as important for electability at the executive office level are "can handle a crisis" and "gets results."



Traits that are very important for a woman candidate to have to be electable (% very important)

	White Dem	White Rep	Black Dem	Black Rep	Latina Dem	Latina Rep	Asian Dem	Asian Rep	Lesbian Dem	Lesbian Rep
Can handle a crisis	77	75	74	72	75	74	72	68	74	78
Gets results	70	71	70	65	68	65	64	70	70	65
Cares about people like you	66	64	63	55	62	60	61	57	59	62
Brings people together	62	60	60	63	61	57	57	62	57	60
Shares your values	61	60	55	59	58	59	59	58	57	49
Confident	57	62	59	52	58	57	58	63	62	56
Authentic	57	67	57	57	61	58	61	59	54	59
Brings about change	49	48	45	44	44	43	45	42	51	51
Is measured, not harsh, in communication	42	41	43	37	43	41	43	38	39	39

QUALIFICATIONS

When asked why some people say they would vote for a woman “if she were qualified,” many participants attribute this to traditional gender norms, yet still actively participate in upholding those norms.

The majority of voters surveyed think all of the hypothetical women candidates tested are qualified.

Being seen as a “bridge builder” is especially important when it comes to showing qualifications.

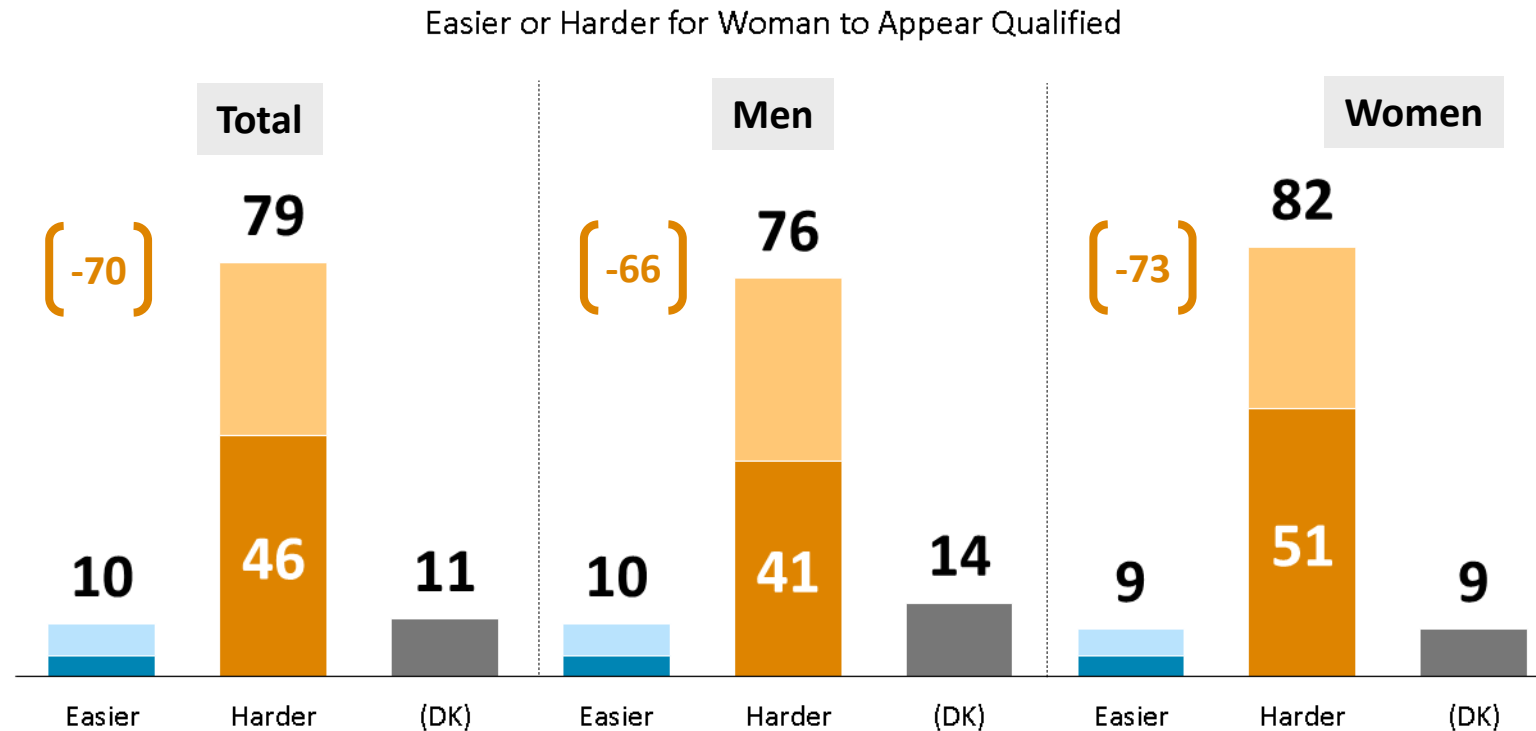
“[...] I THINK THAT THE GENERAL POPULATION PERCEIVES THAT A WHITE MALE IS QUALIFIED.”

– Latino Man

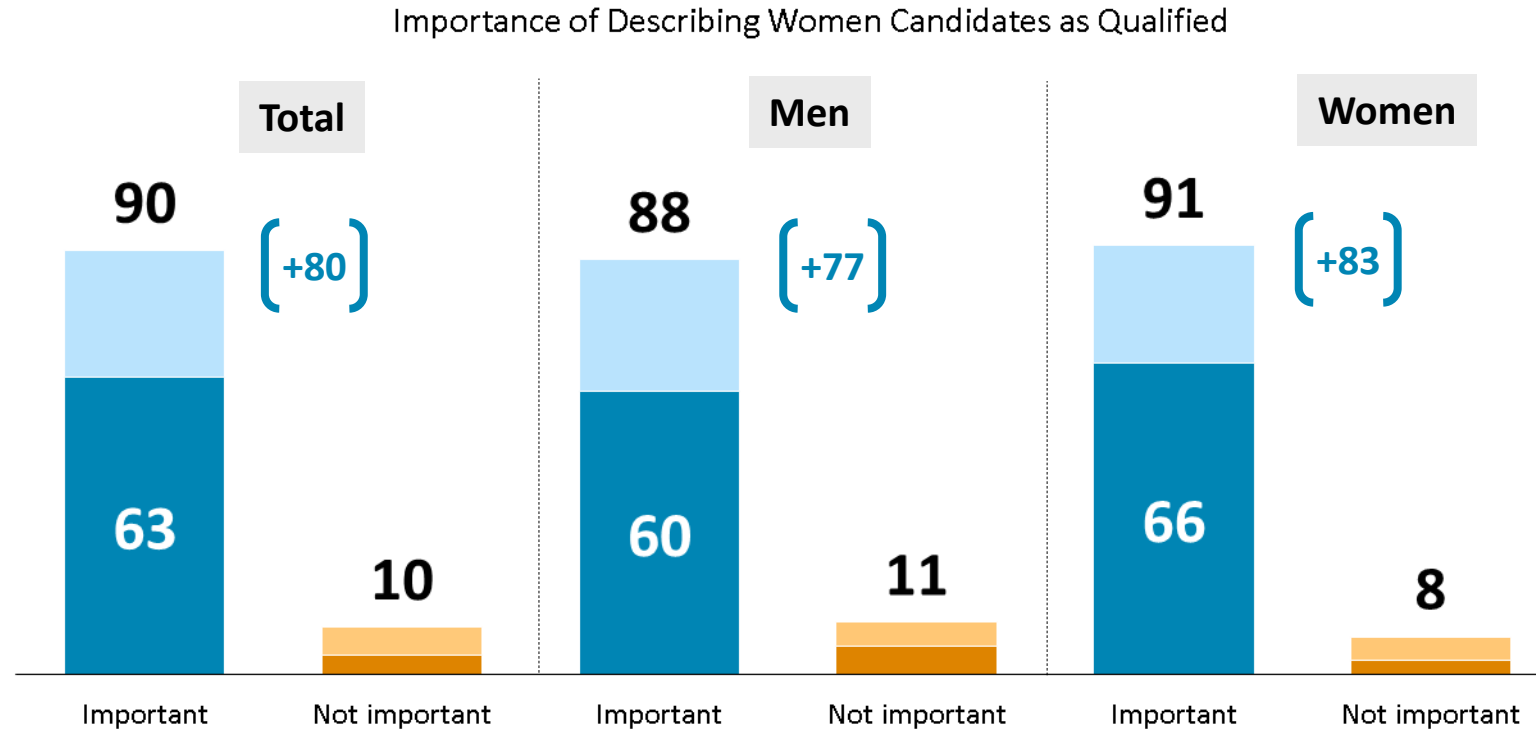


	% Rated “51-100” Qualified
Deborah Williams, a Black woman and Republican	74
Cynthia Smith, a white woman and Democrat	62
Karen Davis, a lesbian white woman and Democrat	67
Sherry Lee, an Asian American woman and Democrat	66
Cynthia Smith, a white woman and Republican	64
Sherry Lee, an Asian American woman and Republican	63
Deborah Williams, a Black woman and Democrat	69
Teresa Garcia, a Latina and Republican	67
Teresa Garcia, a Latina and Democrat	62
Karen Davis, a lesbian white woman and Republican	61

By wide margins, voters believe that it is harder for a woman candidate to appear qualified than a male candidate. Women voters are more likely to hold this view than men.



Voters also say that it is quite important that a woman candidate include that she is qualified in her campaign biography.



How important is it that a woman candidate include in her description that she is qualified -- very important, somewhat important, a little important, or not important at all?

Top experiences that make a woman candidate qualified in voters' eyes are working with members of the other party as well as building private-public partnerships to create jobs and new businesses.

2. Experiences that make a woman candidate qualified	% Very Qualified	% Qualified
Worked with members of the other party	50	85
Built private-public partnerships to create jobs and new business	49	86
Has a written economic plan endorsed by business and labor	44	85
Brought state funding to her community	43	82
Has a bold plan with innovations in technology and energy in the state	42	83
Served in the state Legislature	41	85
Was a business owner who created jobs and balanced budgets	40	82
Served in a statewide office	38	83
Was a long-time advocate in her community	36	78
Served as mayor	34	80
Handled tough questions from a reporter	31	72
Ran because she saw the impact of an issue	26	67
Won a close race for political office	23	65

LIKEABILITY

Focus group participants think it is important for women to be likeable, but acknowledge it is tricky to maintain both likeability and strength while drawing contrasts with opponents.

A woman's party affiliation, race, and sexual orientation influence what voters believe would make her seem likeable.

There are more opportunities for women candidates to showcase their likeability than their qualifications.

	% Very Qualified	% Very Likeable
Worked with members of the other party	50	56
Was a business owner who created jobs and balanced budgets	40	54
Built private-public partnerships to create jobs and new businesses	49	55
Was a long-time advocate in her community	36	54
Has a bold plan with innovations in technology and energy in the state	42	52
Has a written economic plan endorsed by business and labor	44	50
Brought state funding to her community	43	50
Handled tough questions from a reporter	31	49
Ran because she saw the impact of an issue	26	38
Served in the state Legislature	38	36
Served in a statewide office	38	35
Served as mayor	34	31
Won a close race for political office	23	26

"WE HAVE DEFINED LIKEABLE AS BEING LIKE A MAN."

~ College-Educated White Woman



The experiences that make women most likable are similar to the ones that make them most qualified, although business ownership and advocacy in their community follow shortly behind working across the aisle and building private-public relationships.

2. Experiences that make a woman candidate likeable	Very Likeable	Likeable
Worked with members of the other party	56	85
Built private-public partnerships to create jobs and new businesses	55	86
Was a business owner who created jobs and balanced budgets	54	87
Was a long-time advocate in her community	54	85
Has a bold plan with innovations in technology and energy in the state	52	86
Has a written economic plan endorsed by business and labor	50	85
Brought state funding to her community	50	84
Handled tough questions from a reporter	49	82
Ran because she saw the impact of an issue	38	77
Served in the state Legislature	36	77
Served in a statewide office	35	79
Served as mayor	31	74
Won a close race for political office	26	66

Strategy – Developing an Economic Profile

- When it comes to **less traditional experience**—economic development, serving on a finance committee or economic task force—highlighting accomplishments helps women candidates unlock doors to office and level the playing field by establishing credibility as a leader.
- Voters are likely to see a candidate as good on the economy and were likely to vote for her if they perceived her:
 - **To be a problem solver**
 - **To be a change agent**
 - **As having the right priorities**
 - **As effective**
- Women also now get as much credit as men for being good on the economy when they are good on other issues like education and family economics.
- Women benefit from having a written economic plan. It helps women to have validators for their plan.

Trait Advantages for Democratic Women

Whom does this word or phrase better describe a Democratic woman or a Republican man?

In a head-to-head question about whether words and phrases better describe a Democratic woman or a Republican man elected official, Democratic women have advantages on:

However, Democratic women are not perceived to be as strong as Republican men on:

Trait Advantages, adjusted for partisanship	
Trait	Democratic Woman
In touch with people	20
Cares about people like you	19
Stands up for what is right	16
Will work across party lines	16
Will take on special interests	16
Honest	11
Will bring about change	11
Has a vision	8
Knowledgeable	3
A political outsider	0
Gets results	-3
Confident	-9
Strong leader	-10

Trait Advantages for Republican Women

Whom does this word or phrase better describe a Republican woman or a Democratic man?

In a head-to-head question about whether words and phrases better describe a Republican woman or a Democratic man elected official, Republican women have advantages on:

However, Republican women are not perceived to be as strong as Democratic men on:

Trait Advantages, adjusted for partisanship	
Trait	Republican Woman
A political outsider	+23
Confident	+9
Honest	+7
Knowledgeable	+4
Has a vision	+3
Stands up for what is right	+1
Will work across party lines	+1
In touch with people	0
Cares about people like you	-1
Will bring about change	-2
Will take on special interests	-4
Gets results	-5
Strong leader	-5

Addressing issue areas where women are seen as weaker is key.

- Democratic candidates are perceived as better on social issues while Republican candidates are perceived as better on economic issues.
- The gender of the candidate is not as strong a predictor as the party of the candidate, but gender still matters.
- **Introducing an economic platform that can successfully appeal to both parties is a key way to get elected.**
- Some ways to approach an economic platform that appeals to both parties:
 - A green renewable energy economy that promises job creation and long-term jobs.
 - A living wage and affordable childcare appeals to liberal and rural voters.
 - Health care: Medicare and Prescription Drug Prices.
- Crime and security can also be weaknesses for women candidates and emerged as issues late in 2020.

Key Takeaways for Women Candidates on Electability

- The idea that women are not electable is a myth.
- It is key for candidates and their campaigns to **emphasize that the candidate is qualified** – this is not assumed for women as it is for men. Key experiences to address when emphasizing qualification are working across the aisle and building a strong economic platform.
- **Women are forced to balance qualification and likability in a way men are not.** Candidates are most likely to be perceived as likeable if they emphasize their experience bringing different parties together, business experience, and being an advocate for their community.
- Developing a strong economic platform is key given its importance to voters as well as the upcoming challenges we are going to face stemming from COVID-19. Although women traditionally are seen as less credible on economic issues than men, they are seen as better on issues that voters are increasingly connecting to their economic well-being including education, child care, healthcare, and family economics. When establishing an economic plan, highlight these issues that play to women's strengths.



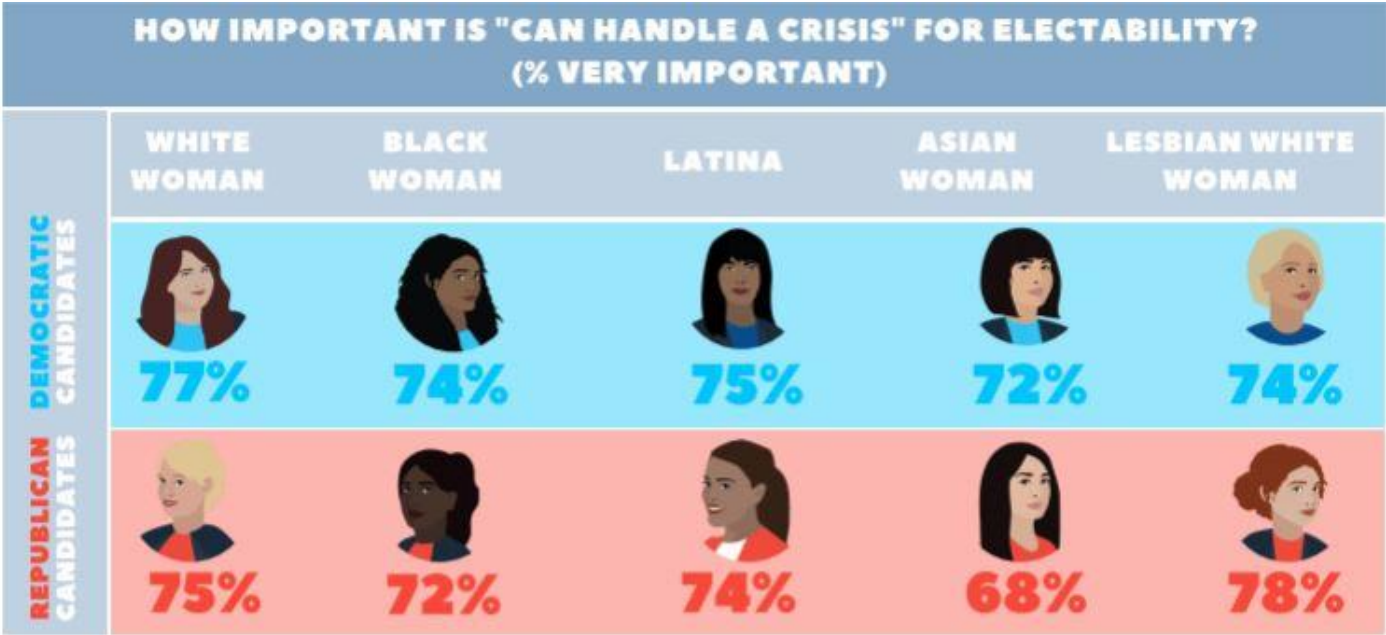
What Women Candidates Need to Know: Times of Crisis



RISING TO THE OCCASION: HOW WOMEN LEADERS PROVE THEY CAN HANDLE A CRISIS



We know from our electability research that “can handle a crisis” is a very important trait for women candidates across the board. This is especially important as we continue as a nation to grapple with COVID-19 and the economic crisis.

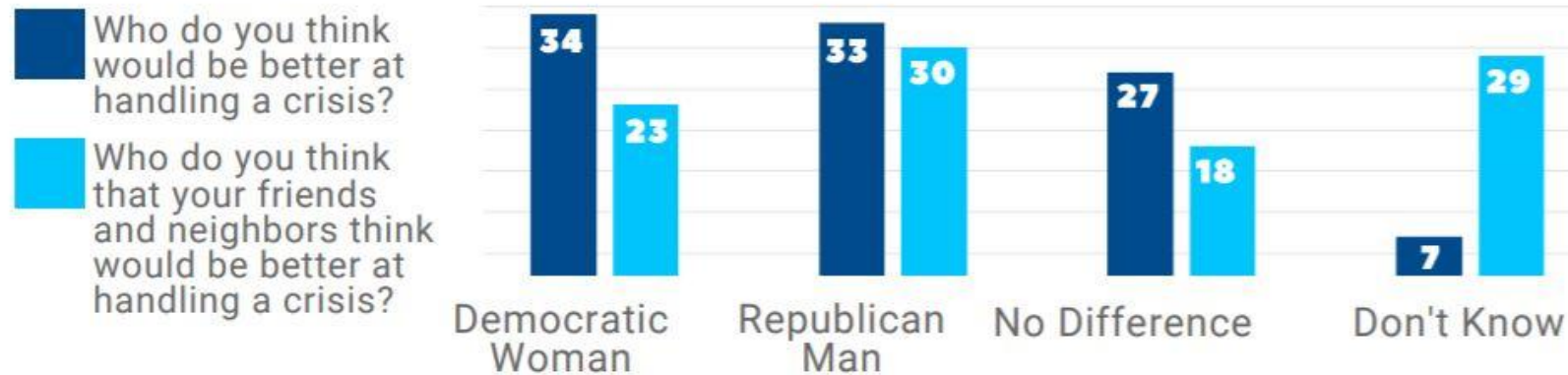


Overall, voters do not see a difference when it comes to a man or woman governor being better at handling a crisis. However, Millennial women and Democrats are more likely to view women governors as being better equipped. Independents also slightly favor women governors.

ASSUMING EQUAL QUALIFICATIONS, DO YOU THINK THAT A WOMAN GOVERNOR OR A MAN GOVERNOR WOULD BE BETTER AT HANDLING A CRISIS?					
	WOMAN	MAN	NET	NO. DIFF	ANALYSIS
All	13	13	0	69	There is a gender gap of 13 points between men and women voters.
Men	6	13	-7	76	
Women	19	13	+6	63	
Millennial Men	6	17	-11	76	Between Millennial men and women, the gender gap is even larger: 24 points.
Millennial Women	21	8	+13	65	
Democrat ID	20	7	+13	69	While Democrats and Independents think a woman would be better, Republicans prefer a man.
Independent ID	17	13	+4	65	
Republican ID	5	21	-16	68	
White	12	12	0	72	African American, Latinx, Asian-American/Pacific Islander, and white voters are essentially split.
African American	18	22	-4	55	
Latinx	18	20	-2	57	
AAPI	12	17	-5	68	

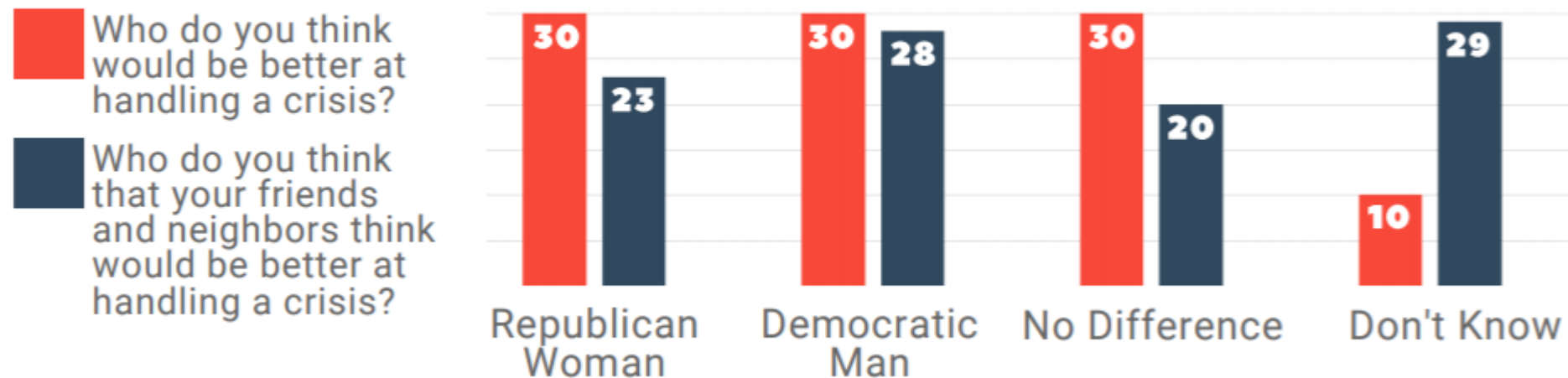
When a Democratic woman governor is positioned against a Republican man governor, voters are generally split on who they think would better handle a crisis. However, voters lean towards the Republican man when it comes to who they think their friends and neighbors would think would respond better.

DEMOCRATIC WOMAN GOVERNOR



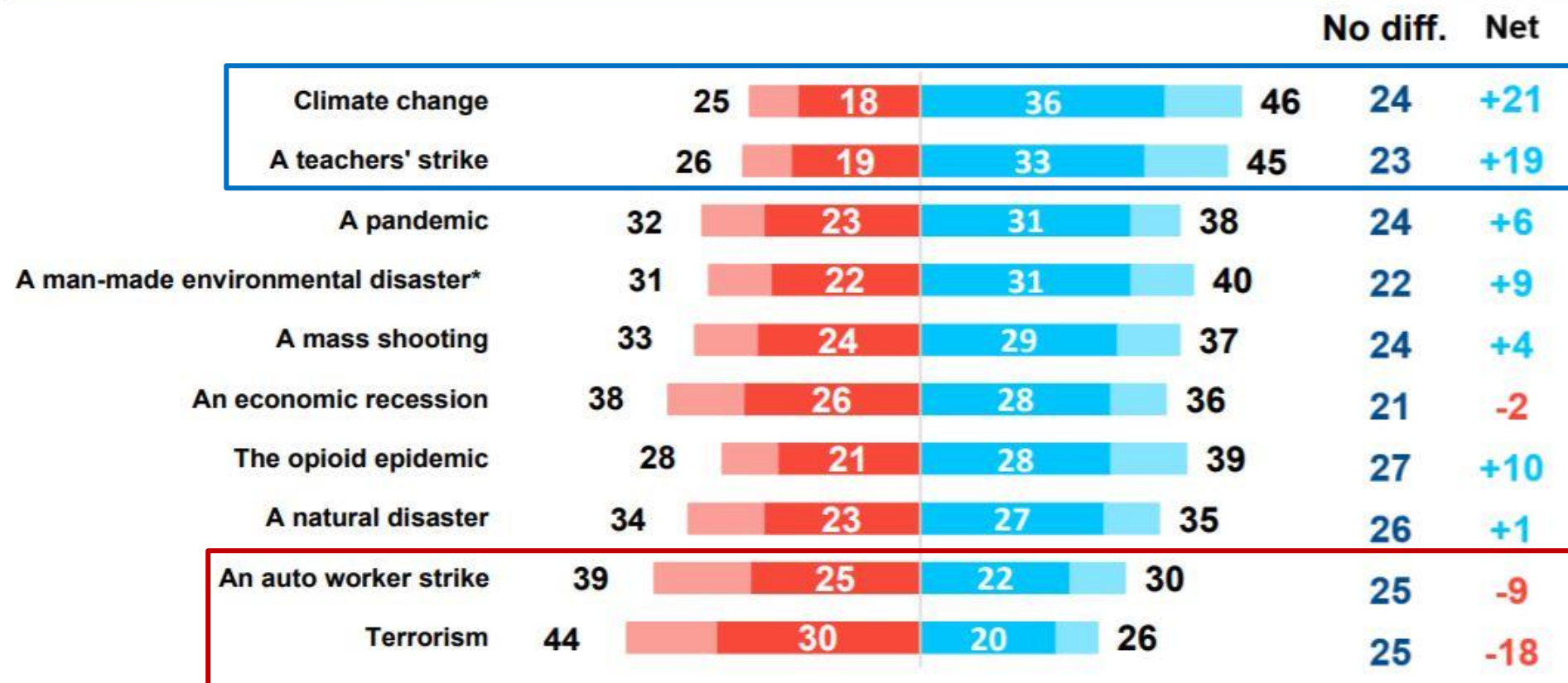
Similarly, when a Republican woman governor is positioned against a Democratic man governor, voters are also split on who they think would better handle a crisis. However, voters lean towards the Democratic man and are less likely to say gender makes “no difference” when it comes to who they think their friends and neighbors think would respond better.

REPUBLICAN WOMAN GOVERNOR



A Democratic woman governor outperforms a Republican man governor in voters' opinions by wide margins when responding to climate change and a teacher's strike. The Democratic woman performs slightly better when it comes to a pandemic. The Republican man performs better when responding to an auto worker strike and terrorism.

Who would be better at handling this type of crisis: a Democratic woman governor or a Republican man governor?



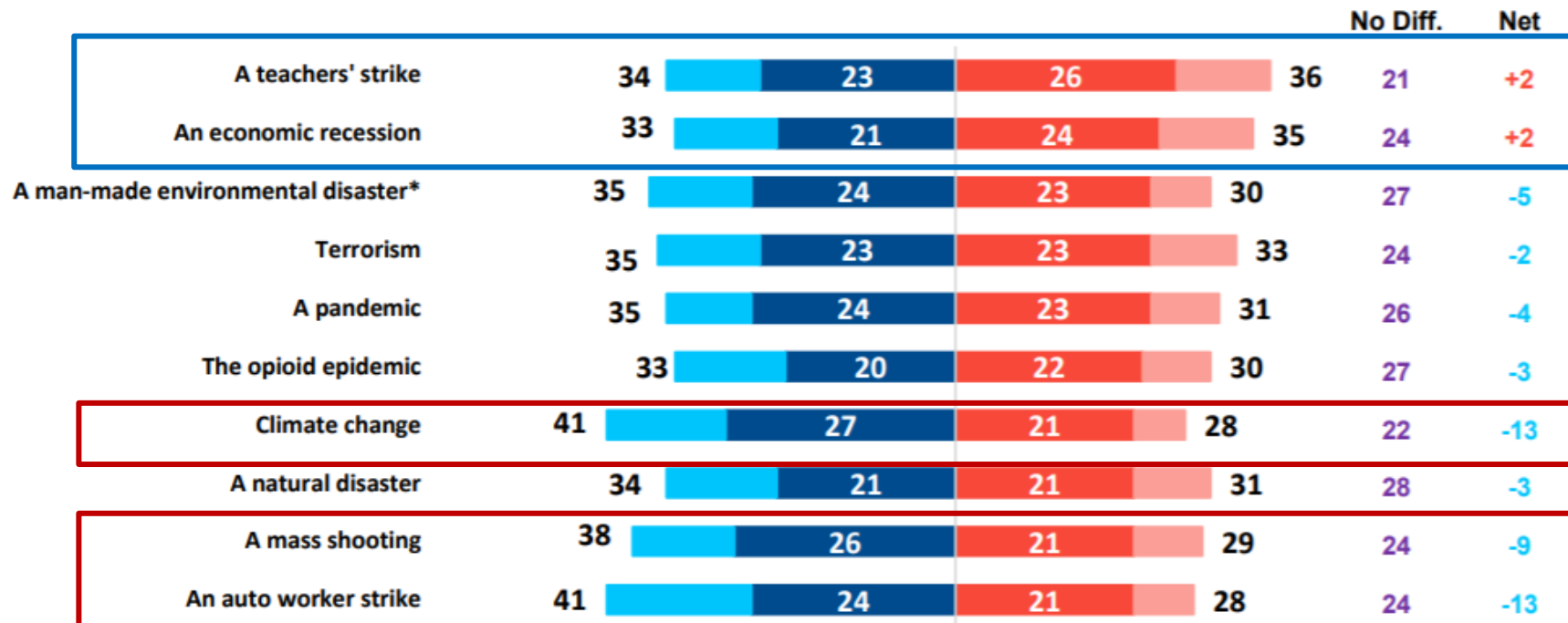
The Democratic woman has advantages on most issues across demographics. Women voters are more likely than men voters to view a Democratic woman as handling the different types of crisis better – especially Millennial women.

Who would be better at handling this type of crisis: a Democratic woman governor or a Republican man governor?

Net Democratic Woman Minus Republican Man	All	Gender		Millennials		Race				PID		
		M	W	M	W	W	AA	L	AAPI	D	I	R
Climate change	+22	+20	+23	+32	+28	+24	+15	+24	+25	+80	+28	-39
A teachers' strike	+19	+14	+23	+25	+32	+19	+18	+37	+26	+74	+32	-41
The opioid epidemic	+10	+10	+10	+9	+21	+10	+22	+16	+7	+70	+12	-48
A man-made environmental disaster*	+9	+5	+12	+13	+21	+9	+6	+24	+14	+70	+14	-56
A pandemic	+6	+2	+10	+8	+17	+8	+13	+13	+4	+73	+18	-64
A mass shooting	+4	-2	+10	0	+14	+6	-1	+10	+5	+67	+16	-64
A natural disaster	+1	-3	+5	+7	+17	+3	+5	+12	+1	+62	+1	-60
An economic recession	-1	-6	+2	-3	+8	-1	+7	-9	-4	+66	-12	-66
An auto worker strike	-9	-12	-7	-6	+8	-9	-7	+3	-2	+49	-13	-67
Terrorism	-18	-20	-16	-18	+2	-19	-5	-9	-16	+43	-33	-74

In most types of crisis, the Republican woman is even with the Democratic man. The two crises where the Republican woman is at the largest disadvantage are climate change (probably due to partisanship) and an auto workers' strike. Terrorism is interesting because partisanship helps the Republican woman.

Who would be better at handling this type of crisis: a Republican woman governor or a Democratic man governor?



Across most subgroups, voters tend to think that a Democratic man would do better on different crises or that the two candidates would perform about even. Independent voters think a Republican woman would do better on a recession, teachers' strike, and terrorism. African American voters think a Republican women would do better on a teachers' strike. A Democratic man has fairly large advantages across subgroups on a mass shooting, an auto workers' strike, and climate change.

Who would be better at handling this type of crisis: a Republican woman governor or a Democratic man governor?

Net Republican Woman Minus Democratic Man	All	Gender		Millennials		Race				PID		
		M	W	M	W	W	AA	L	AAPI	D	I	R
An economic recession	+2	+1	+3	-1	-3	+2	-22	-20	-8	-54	+7	+58
A teachers' strike	+2	-1	+5	-13	-5	+2	+13	-16	-9	-58	+10	+59
Terrorism	-2	0	-3	-6	-8	-2	-27	-8	-2	-56	+6	+50
A natural disaster	-3	-7	+1	-4	0	-3	-12	-12	-5	-59	+2	+52
The opioid epidemic	-3	-5	-1	-9	+3	-2	-8	-5	-12	-55	-3	+49
A pandemic	-4	-5	-2	-8	-11	-3	-1	-16	-12	-62	-4	+55
A man-made environmental disaster	-5	-4	-6	-11	-16	-3	-14	-17	-12	-63	-4	+52
A mass shooting	-9	-10	-8	-9	-16	-8	-30	-12	-9	-62	-8	+43
An auto worker strike	-13	-15	-12	-15	-14	-11	-17	-24	-17	-64	-20	+39
Climate change	-13	-16	-11	-25	-27	-4	-10	-24	-20	-72	-6	+41

Top traits for women to have before, during, and after a crisis include good communicator, listens to experts, decisive, and confident.

HOW IMPORTANT IT IS TO YOU THAT A WOMAN GOVERNOR HAS THIS TRAIT BEFORE, DURING, AND AFTER A CRISIS?												
% VERY IMPORTANT	ALL	GENDER		MILLENNIALS		RACE				PARTY ID		
		M	W	M	W	W	AA	L	AAPI	D	I	R
Good communicator	88	84	91	86	86	88	91	93	91	92	83	86
Listens to experts	83	81	85	87	79	84	80	85	89	89	79	81
Decisive	82	83	82	77	77	81	88	89	83	80	85	86
Confident	80	77	83	79	74	79	89	85	82	80	81	83
Calm	78	73	81	70	74	77	85	84	84	75	73	85
Brings people together	74	70	77	67	71	71	82	81	85	81	73	70
Transparent	73	76	71	74	66	72	77	85	78	79	63	72
Strong	73	71	76	66	67	70	78	85	76	76	69	73
Empathetic	63	57	69	60	66	66	76	79	79	73	70	53

Top actions for women to take surrounding a crisis include developing a plan, working with other leaders, and making sure her state is prepared.



Key Takeaways for Women Candidates on Handling a Crisis

- **Confidence is key.** It signals both qualifications and likeability and is essential when it comes to showing you can handle a crisis.
- **Women have an advantage over men when it comes to taking a 360-degree view.** Use this when showcasing your ability to build – and execute – a plan that prepares for the future.
- **Highlight your track record as a problem solver.** For voters, problem solving is about mobilizing stakeholders, working on multiple fronts, listening to experts to find solutions, and showing you can change the plan if need be.
- **Be a team captain.** It is important to be a leader, but one that listens to others, works with others, and is able to delegate tasks.
- **Emphasize your communication and listening skills.** Voters want to be able to count on timely, accurate, and transparent information while at the same time know you're listening to stakeholders, including experts, other leaders, businesses, and people who are impacted.
- **Know that empathy is needed, but is not enough on its own.** It's important to acknowledge the pain and sorrow that accompany crises, but voters want you to have a plan to address the fallout and move forward.



What Women Candidates Need to Know: Combating Sexism in Media Coverage



Key Findings – The Damage of Sexism in Campaigns

- In a hypothetical race between women of different ethnicities and a white male, voters start off in favor of the woman candidate.
- However, when a news story criticizes the women for supporting a bill that will raise taxes, support drops off sharply. Even in a situation where a woman candidate has already been attacked, sexist coverage further diminishes her vote and the perception that she is qualified – which strongly correlates with the vote.

Key Findings – Responding to sexist and racist media coverage helps

- When the woman candidate or a validating third-party organization stands up to confront sexist and racist coverage, voters respond well. The woman responding herself shows the biggest gains.
- Following these responses, the women candidates of all ethnicities regain large margins over their white male opponent.

“Control” – Text of Statement

Today the State Legislature passed sweeping health care legislation and our legislator Jane Smith [an African American, Latina, Asian American] voted for a health care bill that includes a substantial tax increase. She refused to answer questions about her vote and support for her campaign has been eroding as she comes under pressure on the campaign trail. At her announcement, commentators remarked on the excitement her campaign generated and the quality of her vision.



“Sexism” – Text of Statement

Further exploring her votes on health care and taxes, Jane Smith supported an article in the health care bill that said that any state that declared an emergency would get a \$300 million grant. A talk radio host commented, she has been **acting like an ice queen**, making it difficult for her to hold support. She has been a **“mean girl”** when anyone tried to get her to explain her vote.



Recommended Language to Use when Responding

- Hold women and men to the same standard
- Has no place in the media
- My appearance is not news
- Depict women as being less serious and having less to offer
- Much to offer my constituents
- Damages our political debate and democracy
- We must end this type of coverage for women candidates
- The coverage focuses on what she wears rather than what she thinks

The Institute for Strategic Dialogue (ISD) analyzed online abuse targeting Congressional candidates during the 2020 US presidential campaign and found that women and candidates from ethnic minority backgrounds are especially likely to be targeted systemically with abusive content.

- **Women were far more likely than men to be abused on Twitter**, with abusive messages making up more than 15% of the messages directed at every female candidate analyzed, compared with around 5–10% for male candidates.
- **Women of ethnic minority backgrounds were particularly likely to face online abuse.** On Twitter, Democratic Congresswoman Ilhan Omar (Somali–American) received the highest proportion of abusive messages of all candidates reviewed, at 39%. Democratic Congresswoman Alexandria Ocasio Cortez (Puerto-Rican–American) received the highest proportion of abusive comments on Facebook.
- Both on Twitter and Facebook, **abuse targeting women was more likely to be related to their gender than that directed at men.**
- On Facebook, **female Democrats received ten times more abusive comments than their male counterparts**, while Republican women received twice as many abusive comments as Republican male peers.



Recommendations for addressing this online abuse include requiring more transparency on content moderation from platforms such as Facebook and Twitter, as well as enhanced training on recognizing gender-based abuse.

- **Social media platforms need to provide greater transparency** about their content moderation policies, processes and enforcement outcomes relating to harassment and abuse.
- **Social media platforms should archive and preserve all data relating to content removals** in order to enable future study on content moderation.
- **Human moderators need to receive appropriate training and guidance** on detecting and assessing abuse targeting high-profile individuals, including gender-based and intersectional abuse.
- Social media platforms should put in place **measures to address and minimize the abuse and harassment of politicians and high-profile figures on their platforms.**
- **Democratic governments should pursue regulation requiring transparency and accountability** for the processes and systems that order, curate, promote, target, amplify or, in many cases, profit from user-generated content.





What Women Candidates Need to Know: Resilience

Voters respond best when a woman candidate centers on voters, not herself, in post-election messaging. They want to hear a woman candidate say that she is positive and hopeful, and they do not want to hear her use excuses or place blame, even indirectly. Voters respond well to a woman who reinforces what she believes in, what she will continue to fight for, and how she will do it.

"Not putting any excuses in your speech and owning what occurred because there is always going to be a loser." – Democratic woman, Atlanta

"She was proud. She said she was proud and she was hopeful and she said she was going to continue to fight for the issues. I like that they believe in something so strong that they won't give up. And she focused on the issues that she was fighting for and she was going to continue working on those issues." – Latina woman, Phoenix

"No bashing." – African American woman, Detroit

"Lose graciously. Yeah, I lost, but it is okay and this is what I will do. You show that you are genuine, you are real..." – Independent woman, Richmond

"No blame." – Republican man, Atlanta

"Just being unselfish and getting that across to the media and to everyone. Okay, I lost or you know we have had kind of these issues, but either we will continue to fight or we will work with the other party. There are broad issues I am sure that are across the board that need to be fixed." – Republican man, Atlanta

"Just because you lost doesn't mean that it is over." – Republican woman, Richmond

Voters want to see a losing candidate who is community-focused and an issues-oriented public servant rather than someone trying to acquire money, power, or attention.

Now you are going to hear some different things that a woman candidate generally could do after she loses an election. For each, please tell if that would make her very qualified to run for office again, somewhat qualified, a little qualified, or not qualified at all.

Things a Woman Can Do After Losing to Make Herself Qualified to Run for Office Again	Very Qualified	Qualified
Tier One		
Keep serving as an elected official in her current office	51	83
Tier Two		
Go on a listening tour to learn about the concerns of her community	44	77
Take a role in her political party	43	79
Tier Three		
Help other women run for office	38	68
Create a group that holds the winning candidate accountable for key priorities	36	70
Start a nonprofit to follow up on an issue that she has been engaged in	36	70
Serve on a commission for economic development	35	72

Recommendations

- **Recognize that losing is not the end.** You can start launching your next campaign as soon as your concession speech or statement. Focus on listening to your community, continuing to fight for your ideals, and getting things done for the community.
- **Focus your messaging on voters, not yourself.** Be values-oriented and grounded in the needs of your constituency.
- **Be forward thinking.** Look to the future and don't dwell on the past. Voters are sensitive to any perceived whining or blaming.
- **Find ways to stay engaged in the community and on issues.** Work on an issue that was big in the campaign, build political skills, and network with other leaders.



Questions?

Methodologies

Methodology: Electability

In the focus groups, participants shared their opinions of a Republican woman, a Democratic woman, an African American woman, a Latina woman, an Asian American woman, and a lesbian woman who are running for governor. Lake Research Partners and Bellwether Research conducted 12 focus groups with men and women in June of 2019 segmented as follows:

Tampa June 3	Detroit June 5	Des Moines June 6
Latinas Asian/Pacific Islander Men	Non-college white women African American men	Older white women Non-college white men
Phoenix June 11		Philadelphia June 13
Asian/Pacific Islander women College white women Latino men		African American women LGBTQ people College white men

Participants were recruited to reflect a mix of age, marital status, parental status, income, and education. This memo uses the term "participants" in reference to the participants of the twelve focus groups.

Survey:

Lake Research Partners and Bellwether Consulting designed and administered this survey that was conducted over the phone from July 29 – August 8, 2019. The survey reached a total of 2,500 likely 2020 voters nationwide.

Telephone numbers were drawn from the TargetSmart voter file. The data were weighed slightly by region, education, and race by gender to reflect attributes of the actual population. Party identification was weighted to be even among the total sample, men, and women. The margin of error for the total sample is +/-2.0% and 6.2% for each profile.

In the survey, we segmented the sample so that respondents reacted to a single woman candidate of a unique party identification and ethnic and racial background or sexual orientation. As a control, we also tested David Johnson, a straight white man of the opposite political party of the woman candidate. All names of the hypothetical candidates are fictitious.

Methodology: Crisis

METHODOLOGY

FOCUS GROUPS

Lake Research Partners and Bellwether Research and Consulting conducted 6 focus groups with men and women in March of 2020 segmented as follows:

CHARLESTON, SC MARCH 12	PHOENIX, AZ MARCH 16	CANTON, OH MARCH 18
Gen Z and Millennial women, mix of races	Gen X and Boomer white women	African American, Latinx, or Asian/Pacific Islander women
African American, Latinx, or Asian/Pacific Islander men	Gen Z and Millennial men, mix of races	Gen X and Boomer white men

Participants were recruited to reflect a mix of age, marital status, parental status, income, and education. Due to social distancing guidelines put into place in mid-March, the Canton, Ohio groups were conducted online. The Charleston and Phoenix groups were conducted in person.

SURVEY

Lake Research Partners and Bellwether Research and Consulting designed and administered this survey that was conducted over the phone from April 6 – April 13th, 2020. The survey reached a total of 1,000 likely 2020 voters nationwide along with oversamples of 300 African American, 300 Latinx, 400 AAPI, 150 Millennial women, and 200 Millennial men likely voters.

Telephone numbers were drawn from the TargetSmart voter file. Party ID was weighted to even Democrats and Republicans among the total sample, as well as among men and women, white, African American, Latinx, Asian/Pacific Islander voters, and Millennial men and Millennial women.

The base sample was weighted by region, age, race, education, and race by gender to reflect attributes of the actual population. The African American oversample was weighted by age, party ID, and education. The Latinx oversample was weighted by gender, age, and party ID. The AAPI oversample was weighted by gender, age, party ID, and education. The Millennial women oversample was weighted by race, party ID, and education. The Millennial men oversample was weighted by age, race, party ID, and education.

The margin of error for the base sample is +/-3.1%.

Methodology: BLFF Resilience

Lake Research Partners and Bellwether Research designed and administered this survey that was conducted over the phone from August 21 – 30, 2018. The survey reached a total of 2,413 likely 2018 voters, with oversamples of 368 African-Americans, 364 Latinos, and 241 millennials (age 18-35).

Telephone numbers were drawn from listed voter file Catalist sample. The data were weighed slightly by gender, age, region, party identification, race, race by gender, and education to reflect attributes of the actual population. The African American, Latino, and millennial oversamples were weighted slightly by gender, age, and education. The oversamples were weighted down into the base to reflect their natural proportion of the electorate.

The margin of error for the total sample is +/- 2.0%, +/- 5.1% for the African American and Latino oversample, and +/- 6.3% for the millennial oversample. In interpreting survey results, all sample surveys are subject to possible sampling error; that is, the results of a survey may differ from those which would be obtained if the entire population were interviewed. The size of the sampling error depends upon both the total number of respondents in the survey and the percentage distribution of responses to a particular question.

Methodology: Resilience

Lake Research Partners and Bellwether conducted nine focus groups with men and women in July and August of 2018 segmented as follows:

Richmond, July 24:
Independent women
Republican women

Phoenix, July 31:
Latina women
Independent men

Atlanta, July 26:
Democratic women
Millennial women
Republican men

Detroit, August 1:
African American women
Democratic men

Participants were recruited to reflect a mix of age, marital status, parental status, income, and education. This presentation uses the term “participants” in reference to the participants of the nine focus groups.

Methodology: BLFF Pulse Poll

- Lake Research Partners and Bellwether Research designed and administered this survey that was conducted over the phone from August 29 - September 10, 2017.
- The survey reached a total of 1,500 likely 2018 voters nationwide (779 women, 721 men) with oversamples of 200 African American and 200 Latino voters. Telephone numbers were drawn from listed sample.
- The data were weighed slightly by age, party identification, and education to reflect attributes of the actual population.
- The margin of error for the total sample is +/-2.5% and 6.9% for oversample groups.

Methodology: Simulation of Impact of Sexism in Campaign



The survey was divided into a systematic experiment with a hypothetical Congressional contest between female candidate Jane Smith and male candidate Dan Jones. Voters read a profile about the two candidates and then heard a series of news stories about each. The first news story about Jane was negative, the second news story about Jane was also negative and used sexist language of “mean girl” and “ice queen” to describe her. Both news stories about Dan Jones were negative.

A quarter of the sample was presented with photos and stories about a white Jane Smith; a quarter saw and heard stories about an African American Jane Smith; a quarter, a Latina Jane Smith; and a quarter, an Asian Jane Smith. In each experiment, Dan Jones was a white male.



LRP

LAKE
RESEARCH
PARTNERS

Strategy • Precision • Impact



Washington, DC | Berkeley, CA | New York, NY

LakeResearch.com

202.776.9066

Celinda Lake

clake@lakeresearch.com