



**Republican Party of Texas  
Candidate Resource Guide**

**By**

**State Republican Executive Committee**

**Assembled by the Grassroots Volunteers of the  
Republican Party of Texas SREC Party Organization Committee**

**August 2015**

© Copyright 2015 Republican Party of Texas. All rights reserved.

Paid for by the Republican Party of Texas and not authorized by any candidate or candidate's committee.  
\* 512-477-9821\* [www.texassgop.org](http://www.texassgop.org) \*



REPUBLICAN PARTY OF TEXAS

1108 Lavaca Street Suite 500  
Austin, TX 78701  
Phone 512.477.9821  
Fax 512.480.0709  
[texasgop.org](http://texasgop.org)

Dear Candidate,

Thank you for running as a Republican candidate in this election cycle. Elections are certainly not easy. Running for public office requires a lot of time and personal sacrifice. I commend you for making those sacrifices and stepping up to fill this important role. Without people like you running to represent Republican values, the Party would not be where it is today.

We hope that this manual will assist you in your new role as a candidate for public office. This is intended to help offer guidance as you learn to navigate this new and exciting time of life.

Having strong Republican candidates who are willing to run for office is critical to our present and future success. I am tremendously grateful for your willingness to serve in this new capacity.

Please do not hesitate to contact our office if there is anything we can assist with.

God bless you and God bless Texas,

Tom Mechler

Chairman,  
Republican Party of Texas

# TABLE OF CONTENTS

## **Self-Evaluation:**

Why am I running?

## **Legal Qualifications:**

What is the process to get my name on the ballot?

## **Organization:**

How do I plan to run for office and how do I execute the plan?

## **Issues Presentation:**

What will my message be for the office I am running for?

## **Communications:**

How do I develop an effective communications strategy?

## **Scheduling/Community Involvement:**

How do I effectively manage my campaign's limited time?

## **Fundraising:**

How do I raise sufficient funds for the campaign?

## **Budgeting:**

How do I plan a campaign budget and can I sustain my family throughout the campaign?

## **Grassroots Engagement:**

What can I expect from the local Republican Party to help me win my race?

## **Winning:**

What legal challenges could I expect in a tight race? What now?

## **Appendix A:**

Candidate self-evaluation questionnaire

## **2016 RPT Candidate Resource Guide**

### **Introduction**

Congratulations on your decision to consider running for public office. As Republicans, we believe in limited government, promoting free enterprise, preserving traditional family values, and defending our national sovereignty. These philosophical principles are of the utmost importance to our party and should have ultimately led you to the decision to consider a run for office as a Republican.

There are many factors involved in campaigning for public office. A person's ideology or name ID does not make the sole difference in a campaign; outworking your competition does. This manual is intended to help you by providing examples of how to structure a campaign, plan a budget, find key volunteers, and consider how to target your message for the office you are seeking, whether it is a race for Congress or a local county race.

Each candidate and office holder should have and continue to build relationships with the local community. Electoral victories and governing effectively are tied to strong community relationships. Republican candidates should also have strong ties to the local and state Republican Party to better promote Republican beliefs within the context of their elected office and campaign.

Candidates should have the right character qualities to pursue an office. These will be discussed more in-depth later in this guide, but the key characteristics are integrity, leadership, and credentials.

The table of contents is listed in a frequently asked questions format to assist candidates and county chairs with candidate recruitment for the correct races. If you are running for an office in the Texas Legislature, United States Congress, or another statewide position, it is very important that you secure a political consultant. Your consultant will most likely provide you much more in-depth information than is contained in this manual. For this reason, this manual is focused more on local races. Also make sure you file all necessary paperwork with the Texas Ethics Commission and/or county clerk to declare a treasurer prior to soliciting for donations.

This candidate resource guide is written from the grassroots perspective to capture the big picture of a campaign, but also from the perspective of SREC members who have worked for candidates and elected officials. They have identified common mistakes and have suggestions on how to overcome some of these obstacles. Most of the tips are common to all campaigns and candidates.

## Candidate Self-Evaluation

### Why am I running?

The most common question you will receive on a campaign is “Why are you running?” Successful candidates have a well formed answer to this question before they have filed for office, developed their strategy, or hired a staff. If you cannot articulate a solid response to this question, you need to take the time to formulate your answer first.

#### Aligning Your Talents with the Correct Office

Correctly aligning your passion, faith, experience, and politics into effectively addressing important issues is the key to choosing whether to run, and for which office.

- *Identify a problem you are trying to solve and your solution:*

Residents of a geographic area, whether it be a precinct, county, district, or state, have an understanding of some of the problems they are facing. Maybe the challenge is local in which the county is determining a method of expanding their wastewater facilities or maybe the challenge is statewide as the Texas Legislature is debating an education issue that affects school districts in your region.

Whatever the problem, you must identify it and provide an easy to understand solution from your perspective for that problem. A candidate who is running without a solution to a defined problem will be hard to distinguish from other candidates.

Your view of issues and perspectives on the problems will be critical to convincing people whether you can win or lose. This is discussed more in-depth later, but the identification of a problem and solutions will be critical to gauging and gaining early support.

Make sure the problems you identify also match with the office for which you are running. For example, a person running for county commissioner should not make their biggest issue an international treaty that is currently under debate in the U.S. Senate.

- *Determine your talents, skills, and professional background:*

Voters typically like to see a candidate who has a professional background with ties to the local community. Identifying your talents, skills, and professional background will help you provide solutions to the problem you have identified. For example, if your talent and professional background is accounting, you would be well suited to run for a tax assessor-collector position, but probably not a justice of the peace office. Filing for an office in which

the voters may believe you are under-qualified will make the chances of success for that election more difficult.

- *Identify the current offices:*

Identify the current offices within your county and district to see which are up for election. Also, identify the current office holders and their party affiliation. If the current office holder is a fellow Republican, you are encouraged to speak directly with the office holder prior to filing for a place on the ballot. This is simply out of courtesy but also to let them know you have identified an issue that needs to be resolved. You may be able to find common ground or you may be pointed to an area in which your talents will be well-suited to help solve the problems.

### Qualities of a Candidate

Each candidate and elective office holder must hold key character qualities: integrity, leadership, and credentials.

- *Integrity:*

Integrity was defined by C.S. Lewis as “Who you are when nobody is watching.” This is not just important in a campaign, but also in your personal life. Voters must trust your ability to hold the office you are seeking and your future colleagues must trust you when governing. Integrity and trust extend to ensuring that the ethics laws are adhered to, not just in a campaign context, but also beyond that. Your friends and peers must be able to testify that you are trustworthy and have high personal integrity.

- *Leadership:*

Leaders are born, but they still must learn to hone their leadership abilities. The positions in which you currently serve as a leader, whether it be a church, a community organization, a job, or a non-profit organization, have allowed you to display your leadership qualities, your natural skills, and the areas in which you need improvement.

If you have never served in a leadership position, you may find a campaign very challenging as you will have to take a position on issues, lead a campaign team, and make calculated decisions. This could leave you at a disadvantage to another candidate with more experience in leadership capacities. On the other hand, if you are an experienced leader in the community, you may become too comfortable in your position, which may lead to some vulnerabilities from a skilled competitor who can win on certain issues that are critical to the district.

The correct leadership balance is important to voters and is an important character quality to have among elected officials. Like it or not, you may be a public office holder and people will look to you for guidance, direction, and solutions to both real and perceived problems. You will also be a role model for others, so be cognizant of how you portray yourself and how you treat others in the process of campaigning.

- *Credentials:*

Ideally, candidates will have strong ties to their local communities through activities in local community organizations and the local Republican Party. A totally unknown candidate will not only surprise your local precinct chairs, who are supposed to help organize the party for victory, but will also surprise many in the local community. There is no better way to establish your credentials within the community than to have a list of organizations you have served in, and leaders within those organizations who can vouch for you. A candidate will also need to have strong credentials within the Republican Party or an understanding of the party platform, what it means to be a Republican, and why the platform is important even in local races. There is no better way to ensure a contested primary than to not know the party platform and our goals as a party.

Individuals who are considering a run for office in the future would be well-served to begin placing themselves in leadership roles in the community early through local Rotary Clubs, Lions Clubs, volunteer activities at their local church, and local nonprofits.

#### Other Considerations:

- *Family:*

Does your immediate family support you running for office? If you have not talked to your family, then that should be the first step. A supportive family will make the campaign easier. A non-supportive family will make the campaign nearly impossible. A campaign will take your full energy, time, and attention to be successful. You have to be willing to miss a family event simply because it conflicts with a campaign event. You may have to spend your anniversary, at a campaign fundraiser. These are the realities of a campaigning.

- *Finances:*

Some key questions:

Can I support myself financially during a campaign? There is a likelihood that you will have to take a leave of absence from your job in order to run. Can you afford to do this? If you cannot work during your campaign or your employer does not give their blessing to an extended leave of absence, you will have to give this careful consideration before making the jump into a campaign. Candidates and elected officials frequently sacrifice to run for office in this regard.

Do you have personal finances you can draw from to win? Many candidates have to dip into their personal savings to run a competitive race. There are examples of State Representative candidates who loan themselves over \$150,000 to compete in the initial race. For an extreme example, in 2012, former Lt. Gov. David Dewhurst spent over \$20 million of his personal money in a failed attempt to win a vacant U.S. Senate seat. Campaigns take money.

See Appendix A in this manual for a candidate self-evaluation questionnaire.

## Legal Questions

### What Do I Need to Do to Get my Name on the Ballot?

There are two main things **every** candidate needs to do to get their name on the ballot for a state election, which includes partisan elections for state and county races. These steps are: file all necessary documentation with the Texas Ethics Commission or the appropriate county ethics commission/clerk, and file for candidacy with the local or State Republican Party.

#### Texas Ethics Commission:

The [Texas Ethics Commission](#) is a nonpartisan state agency that administers election law with regards to campaign finance. This is to ensure that candidates and office holders meet the state requirements for election law. There are two major forms each candidate must submit in preparation to filing for office.

1. Before a candidate can begin soliciting and collecting campaign donations, a person must file an [Appointment of a Campaign Treasurer form](#) (CTA form) with the Texas Ethics Commission (or the Federal Elections Commission for a federal race). **This is applicable for all races on the ballot.** Any donations you accept prior to filing this paperwork need to be returned and you may be subject to administrative or criminal penalties.
2. Candidates for state office must also file a [personal financial statement](#) with the Texas Ethics Commission.

Once a candidate has begun fundraising and spending money on the campaign, there are Ethics Commission deadlines for submitting campaign finance reports to the agency. Please see this link for detailed information on the Ethics Commission website for campaign finance filings for [state candidates](#) and a separate link for [local candidates](#). In addition, [judicial candidates](#) have separate campaign finance laws and filing schedules.

The Legislature may make changes to the filing requirements, so be sure to consult with the Texas Ethics Commission and the Republican Party prior to filing to run for office.

Candidates who fail to adhere to campaign finance laws may be punished by administrative fines or misdemeanors. Ethics complaints may also be levied against you by opponents which will also cause media and communications problems with regard to the campaign as well.

**Note:** Congressional, U.S. Senate, and Presidential candidates are governed by the Federal Election Commission and have separate requirements. An election law attorney will be of great assistance to you if you are seeking one of these offices.

File for Office:

The Texas Secretary of State's office is the official administrator of elections in Texas. Their website, [www.sos.state.tx.us](http://www.sos.state.tx.us), has all the information that candidates need with regards to the places on the ballot and filing for office.

There are certain dates to be mindful of for the 2016 election:

- **November 14, 2015:** First day for a candidate to file for office for offices that are regularly scheduled to appear on the 2016 primary ballot.
- **December 14, 2015 at 6pm:** Filing deadline for all candidates. The application must be received by the 6pm deadline, (a postmark is not sufficient.)

There are certain requirements that a person needs to fulfill to be considered on the ballot including residency requirements, in-district residency requirements, and in some cases, a person must be an attorney. These requirements for the 2016 election cycle are posted on the Secretary of State's website.

To file for an office that will appear on the primary election ballot (a partisan election), the candidate will generally file with their respective political party county chairman if the district is wholly contained in a single county. If the district consists of multiple counties, the candidate must file with the political party's state chairman. (Offices are listed under the "Issue Presentation" of this document)

The Secretary of State's office has a listing of the forms a candidate must fill out for the office they are seeking. Filing for office with state responsibilities requires a filing fee. The filing fee will vary depending on the office.

A candidate may file through a petition in lieu of the filing fee and a judicial candidate is required to have a petition signed to file for office. For specific information on the petition process, see the petition instruction form on the Secretary of State website.

A listing of which partisan candidates will file with the state party chair or the county party chair along with the filing fees is provided by the Secretary of State.  
<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/candidates/guide/demorrep.shtml>

## Organization

### **How do I plan to run for office and how do I execute the plan?**

Campaigns equal persuasion. Convincing people to vote for you takes a lot of effort. If a voter is equally opposed to the same thing you are opposed to does not always mean they are planning to vote for you. Going back in history, there were times in U.S. history where there were significant factions against a certain elected official, idea, or direction, yet those factions did not communicate what they were for and ended up losing their election. Set goals, direction, and a vision for the office you are seeking, then make sure each person on your campaign staff is in harmony with that goal.

Many successful people adhere to a strategy of “Plan your work then work your plan.” In essence, that is what a successful campaign must do. There is a clear deadline for your work (Election Day) and a clear determination of the winner and loser (election results).

In campaigns, getting “side-tracked,” off-message, and a loss of focus will be detrimental. By building a campaign plan and organizing your team to execute the plan, you will have a measurement of progress. A successful campaign will stay the course.

Each campaign and candidate is unique. That being said, there are some key needs for each campaign in terms of organization and planning.

#### **Campaign Plan:**

When putting together your campaign plan, keep in mind of the following steps:

- 
1. Vision of the campaign
  2. Organize your team
  3. Determine the issues
  4. Outline the tactics
  5. Implement a timeline for these tactics
  6. Determine the budget
  7. Work the cash flow and finance plan
-

Setting the goals, direction, and vision for the campaign is ultimately the job of the candidate.

If you are running for an open seat in a crowded field, the race is based more on individual credentials and goals for the office than anything else. Voters will want to know what differentiates you from the field and why they should be inspired to vote for you. This becomes a challenge as funding will likely be spread across the field and it will take an extremely motivated candidate to reach all the various interest groups in that district.

If you are challenging an incumbent, the vision is based more on personalities and the record of the incumbent in office. You must clearly identify a problem the incumbent has not solved or has created and contrast yourself against the incumbent's record, values, and personality. This does not necessarily mean run a negative campaign, but you will need to be focused on setting up that clear differentiation.

Setting goals also takes an analysis of the district. This will help you to determine how many votes you will need and which areas of the district to target your efforts.

### **Political and District Analysis**

An accurate reading of the current and historical political environment of the locale is vitally important for victory. Below are a few questions that need answering to assist any campaign in determining the political environment of the district. These will help your campaign to concentrate its efforts on designated areas.

1. What occurred in the past few election cycles in this district? Did Romney carry the district in 2012 when running for President? How did other statewide Republicans do in 2012 and 2008? How did some of the local races do including non-partisan races?
2. How did the incumbent do in the last election? Is this an open seat?
3. Does this district lean Republican? What is the swing percentage?
4. What percentage of voters voted in the district in the last election for the office being sought? What about other races? How many votes will you need to win?
5. What kinds of voting trends or growth patterns are there in the district (military, new subdivisions, gated communities, apartments, etc.)?

6. What is the district geography: median income; median cost of a house; percentage of married couples; percentage of married couples with children; percentage of college graduates; percentage of senior citizens; percentage of blue-collar workers versus white-collar workers; percentage of ethnicity in the district; major businesses or industry; major employers?
7. What are the three top issues in your district in the past year (reading local newspapers will give a good indication)?
8. Who are the current precinct chairs in the district and would they become highly motivated for you as a candidate? Why or why not?

**Campaign positions you need to fill:**

- **Campaign Treasurer**

The campaign treasurer's job is to make sure all documents are correctly filled out for the Texas Ethics Commission, including the personal financial statement and the campaign finance reports. The campaign treasurer's name will be listed on every disclaimer to abide by legal requirements. This person should also be a trusted person with influence in the local community as their name will be the only other name guaranteed to be printed on your campaign materials for legal reasons.

- **Campaign Manager**

The campaign manager's job is to make sure the campaign happens. Once the goals of the campaign have been set and written, the campaign manager's job is to make sure that the plan is implemented. If the plan is not realistic, then the campaign manager along with the candidate needs to rewrite the plan. The campaign manager needs to have both a big picture view to keep the goals and timelines of the campaign on target, but also needs to plan and execute the details of the campaign.

One of the primary jobs of a campaign manager is to make sure the candidate is in the right location, at the right time, with the right information in hand for the meeting that is underway.

Depending on the wealth and size of the campaign, the campaign manager may be a one-man operation. In larger races, some of the duties will include: personnel management, supervision of fundraising, media spokesman, event planner, and make the day-to-day decisions.

The campaign manager will make or break the campaign. A quality campaign manager that: prepares the candidate, manages details, plans and executes a campaign strategy, facilitates quality interaction between the candidate and voters, and manages other personnel is worth their weight in gold. While the candidate is the CEO of the campaign and provides a vision to the campaign, a manager is the COO and should be allowed to manage the campaign. A campaign manager who cannot multitask or delegate certain details will be an anchor to the candidate. Candidates should not be afraid to recognize this and be prepared to make a change if necessary.

- Communications Director

In previous years, this person was known as the “press secretary.” With the prevalence of websites, blogs, and social media which now drive campaigns, a more appropriate title is “communications director.” This person is in charge of all **external communications** between the campaign and the real world.

- Identifying local bloggers with enough influence to talk about the candidate. Providing those bloggers with the candidates’ vision for the district.
- Developing the campaign website, its content and photos, and keeping it fresh.
- Maintaining relationships with the traditional media for formal press releases and interviews.
- Coordinate social media to project the candidate’s message (much more on this later). This includes but not limited to Facebook, Twitter, Instagram, and emails. The saying “If a tree falls in a forest and there is nobody there to hear it, does it make a sound?” In campaign speak, now reads, “If a candidate is at an event but did not post anything about the event, did the candidate actually attend?”
- Preparing for local radio interviews and knowing which radio personalities are the best to talk to for campaign announcements.

- Scheduler/Office Director

This person will be in charge of handling the candidate’s daily schedule. Duties will include preparing a schedule for the candidate, writing and sending thank you letters to donors and volunteers. The scheduler is also responsible for keeping accurate files on all invitations: accepted or declined. The scheduler should be aggressive in their approach, actively looking for scheduling opportunities with any and all interest groups, not just Republican or conservative groups. Only the scheduler will be allowed to place events on the schedule (including media and fundraising). The scheduler will need to meet with the campaign

manager and candidate regularly (usually daily) to review and approve the schedule. This person is largely in charge of all **internal communications** to make sure the candidate and campaign team know what's on the daily lineup for events and activities.

This person will also make sure that phones, computers, copy machine are installed and that there are enough materials to get the job done. Returning phone calls and emails will be time consuming, but is a very important part of the campaign. Campaigns can be won or lost depending on whether a phone call is returned, or a thank you letter is sent to a prominent donor.

- Grassroots Coordinator

The grassroots coordinator will serve as the volunteer and coalition coordinator. These duties will include: campaign activities with organizations whose interests align with those of the campaign, making sure precinct chairs and volunteers have materials to hand out to voters, maintain voter contact lists, organize activities that promote the candidate, and facilitate positive interaction with the candidate and voters. The grassroots coordinator needs to be a very outgoing person that can motivate people to accomplish a mission and will work in the trenches with the volunteers. This person also needs to be a deputy voter registrar one of the counties in which the candidate is running.

- Finance Director/Fundraiser

The finance director/fundraiser is responsible for organizing the campaign's fundraising operations. Duties will include: organizing fundraising events, supervising direct mail, scheduling meetings with large donors, recruiting and working with a finance committee. The fundraising director should also prepare a weekly summary for the candidate and the campaign manager. This summary tracks contributions, listing the source, amount and cost of every finance program and contribution. The fundraising director will work with the treasurer to produce the Texas Ethics Commission reports. The finance director also works with the treasurer to ensure the deposit of funds occurs in a timely manner and to the correct accounts.

The fundraising director should write a finance plan with goals on how money is raised on a weekly (or monthly basis). The plan should include cost of events, number of events, number of direct mail fundraising pieces sent and a list of potential VIP's who will be invited.

## **Issues Presentation**

### **What will my message be for the office I am running for?**

Each office has a different set of issues associated with it. Do your best to tailor your message to the issues that pertain to the office you are seeking. As you know, the government is layered between federal, state, and local governments. All have a level of interaction and the actions of one does affect the policies of another, but there are certain limitations within each office and level of government that you would be wise to campaign within.

#### **Federal Offices:**

Federal offices that may appear on the ballot are:

- President
- United States Senate
- United States Congress

If you do not have \$1 million available to spend on the campaign and do not already have a consultant and legal team to navigate you through these campaigns, you will likely not win. That being said, the issues these offices face are federal issues. These issues will include:

- Constitutional framework of the country and government programs
- National sovereignty and defense/foreign relations
- Federal spending and federal debt
- Immigration and border security
- The role of federal agencies in tax collections, personal liberties, health care, environmental protection, and transportation
- Federal income tax

#### **State Offices:**

State offices that may appear on the ballot in Texas are:

- Governor
- Lieutenant Governor
- Attorney General
- Comptroller
- Land Commissioner
- Agriculture Commissioner
- Supreme Court Justice
- Court of Criminal Appeals Justice
- Court of Appeals by District
- Railroad Commissioner
- State Senator
- State Representative
- State Board of Education

The roles of these offices vary greatly. In Texas, we elect the Governor's entire cabinet (with the exception of the Secretary of State) and the executive branch office of the Railroad Commissioner (oversees the agency that regulates oil and gas production). We also elect the judicial branch (statewide and regional offices) and the state legislators (by district). This creates a wide range of issues that are pertinent to these offices.

Some of the issues that a state office holder will face are typically powers that the U.S. Constitution reserves to the individual states through the 10<sup>th</sup> Amendment:

- Education
- Transportation
- Water
- Private property rights
- Social issues, such as abortion regulations and gay marriage
- State agencies and their operations
- State budget and state debt
- State business tax and state sales tax
- State insurance and health care regulations (including tort reform)
- Economic development as a state
- Election laws

#### **Local Offices:**

There are numerous local offices that will appear on the ballot in any given year. For purposes of this manual, we are going to focus on the partisan races and exclude the non-partisan races. The local partisan races that will appear on the ballot include:

- County Judge
- County Commissioner
- Justice of the Peace
- District Judge
- District Attorney
- County Attorney
- Sheriff
- County Court at Law
- Tax Assessor-Collector
- Constable

In looking at this list, you will notice that most of these races relate to local races for law enforcement and county administrative positions. Even within this list, though, you should note that a County Commissioner in Harris County represents more people than are in the entire state of Montana.

Some of the issues that are important locally are:

- Enforcement of local ordinances and state laws
- Setting the county budget and property tax rate
- Property tax administration, including property tax appraisals
- Prosecution of crimes and fair court hearings
- Administration of government services at the local level
- Policy setting among regions for transportation through the development of regional councils and mobility authorities
- Planning growth in the county and interacting with cities that plan to annex additional land
- Indigent health care and local health care authority administration
- Small claims court efficiencies

### **Strategy:**

With the complexity of the issues and the range of offices on the ballot, it is no wonder many voters complain of voter fatigue. There are also many offices that struggle to find votes as very few average voters know that the role of the County Judge is the administer the county functions of government, set the local property tax rate, and appoint local authorities.

To win your campaign, you will need to contrast the ideology of your opponent **with** your own ideology. In the general election, tie your Democrat opponent to the corrupt and liberal administration under our current President (or another local official that has a history of corruption). Highlight your **strong conservatism** and service to the people of Texas.

Within both the primary and general election, determine your main three message points to define yourself and your issues. While the campaign will have other issues, these three points will be the main issues discussed in public and in media. These issues will be unique to each race, candidate, and region.

**Examples:**

A Justice of the Peace candidate may campaign on:

1. Efficient claims court process to expedite cases
2. Respect for the rule of law in determining cases and providing fair trials to all parties
3. Strong public service record and responsible steward of taxpayer funds

A County Commissioner candidate may campaign on:

1. Balancing the county budget without raising property taxes
2. Build out the county road system to plan for new growth without utilizing toll roads
3. Reduce indigent health care costs

A State Representative candidate may campaign on:

1. Reducing mandates placed on school districts to allow local school districts to balance their budgets without raising taxes
2. Eliminating the state franchise tax to create new jobs
3. Protecting private property rights through eminent domain reform

You will also need to make a case that you understand the people of the district better than your Democrat opponent by being more in touch with the citizens and the business community. This will mean reaching out to the business community to determine their needs.

The campaign will seek the support of those who want positive change in the way things are done in the desired office. Democrats in many areas of the state can easily be painted as individuals who associate and agree with President Obama. This will not be a winning strategy in large urban areas, but there are other issues we will need to find common ground on in those urban areas.

**Opposition Research:**

You should make it a high priority to scout your opponents. In the same way a baseball scout will determine the strengths of opponents' rosters weeks in advance of a game, a candidate needs to know who their opponents are and how they voted in the past. You should ask some common questions of your opponents, both primary opponents and general election opponents.

1. Does my opponent have a voting record in their current office that I can review? How do I get the voting record to inform myself of their votes and possibly use certain votes to my advantage? Know your opponents' records.

2. What is my opponents' profession? What associations do they have in the community? Are there any civic or political organizations they are affiliated with that I am not?
3. What is my opponents' ability to raise money? Again, what is their profession, who do they associate with, are they independently wealthy? You may review a candidate's personal financial statement at the Texas Ethics Commission for this information.
4. Have any of my opponents donated money to any candidates in the past? If so, who? Are any of them Democrats? Utilize the Texas Ethics Commission to determine this information.
5. Have any of my opponents voted in the Republican Primary before? Have any of my opponents voted in the Democrat Primary before? When and where? The Secretary of State's office or your local county voter registrar can provide voter data.
6. Have any of my opponents said anything publicly (including on Facebook or twitter) that can be used against them in a campaign? This should be saved and cited.
7. Do any of my opponents have a criminal background or have they been sued in a civil court?
8. Can any of my opponents find any of this information on me if they looked? What is in my own past that could potentially hurt my campaign?

## **Communications**

### **How do I develop an effective communications strategy?**

Communicating your message is the most important part of the campaign. This is not just a focus on the traditional print media, television, or radio nor a how-to develop a press release. These are all important, but your message is important regardless of form of media.

#### **Your Message:**

Your message as a candidate needs to be based on the three highlights of your campaign and why you are running. You need to be able to put that message on a bumper sticker, palm card, twitter, or an elevator speech. The time it takes you to go up four flights on an elevator is all the time you get with an enthusiastic and engaged voter. You need to have your campaign speech boiled down to that short amount of time. Why you are running, what are the highlights of your campaign, and ***ask for their support.*** This is the message you are conveying to voters regardless of the form of media.

Practice that elevator speech with your key supporters.

Your message should be consistent, concise, and accurately reflect your values and vision for the office you are running for. Do not try to fool voters.

#### **Speaking at Events:**

Project your voice! Voters like to hear from candidates and elected officials that can project their voice and do not need microphones! Senator Ted Cruz does an effective job of speaking off the cuff without a microphone and talking to individual voters directly. Both former Governor Rick Perry and Governor Abbott do an excellent job projecting their voices to large crowds.

Your body language and ability to project inspire confidence and poise, which conveys leadership ability. Voters are looking for leadership ability in a person's personality and your body language when speaking in public will convey your personality. Dress and act like the position you are seeking election to, not the job you have.

Remember to say your name and which office you are seeking during the speech.

Practice public speaking. If you are not good at it, look for a debate coach to help you.

### **Forms of Media:**

There are multiple forms of media. Again, your message should not change based on the form of media you are utilizing. Some forms may be lengthier than others, such as print, and others may be more visual, such as television. Regardless, the form of media should and could attract voters to your campaign.

- Television
- Radio
- Newspaper (including online newspapers)
- Blogs and YouTube
- Your campaign website
- Facebook
- Twitter
- Campaign materials

Campaigns will also use the words “free media” and “paid media” to describe types of media.

### **Television:**

Television buys are one of the most expensive things a campaign will do. Television expenses vary based on geographic location, time the ad will air, and which networks will carry it. Cable buys are cheaper than network buys, but the cost will still vary. Check into this early in the campaign so you can accurately budget for the cost and know the time of production.

In urban areas, the campaign should run one or two television ads in the last month of the campaign. The campaign will start with your message and will end hard-hitting. In a general election, a separate TV ad should run a factual advertisement about you and contrast it to your Democrat opponent.

### **Radio:**

Radio ads are less expensive than television and can reach just as wide of an audience in many areas. They are very effective in rural areas that have popular radio shows. They can also be very effective in urban areas that have regionally popular conservative radio talk show hosts. Again, the cost will vary depending on the geographic location, the network, and the time of day. There may also be opportunities for on air interviews on some local programs.

### Newspaper:

Traditional print media has quickly given way to internet-based newspapers. This does not mean ignore newspapers, but the online content will be posted on the website before the print edition shows up in the morning kiosk.

There are some advertising options, but most of these are buried in content that is seldom read. Guest editorials in local newspapers can be very effective in regional races, but many times these are reserved for incumbents.

There are many opportunities to be interviewed by local newspapers. Make sure your communications director is keyed into the content of the interview beforehand and knows the deadline of the story so there is ample opportunity to prepare some sample questions and answers.

Your communications director should email your press releases to all daily newspapers in your district or coverage area. Many times, the press release with quotes will be printed and you can earn media this way. Your communications director will need to have an updated list of all press contacts within the district and be able to provide updated information as a media kit during events.

Newspaper ads will be purchased only for weekly newspapers in small towns. **Buys in daily newspapers and in large cities are a waste of money.**

### Your campaign website:

Your campaign website is the most effective tool at reaching the most number of voters affordably. Many younger voters will never know the candidate, but they will interact with you the candidate without your knowledge on your website. Your website should include a video introduction of yourself and up to date information. If your website is out of date, does not have a personal message and video introduction, and does not have working links to contact candidates, you will lose votes. A crisp, professional website shows you are a serious candidate. A makeshift website with out of date material could hurt your campaign.

The campaign website is your method to completely control your message and communicate to voters 24/7.

### Blogs and YouTube:

This begins the social media phase of media and does not fall into “traditional media” that your parents and grandparents knew. Blogs, while not always unbiased, are an excellent way to get your message out. If you have bloggers who are friendly to your campaign, they will spin stories and your message in such a way to give you more positive coverage. Bloggers will not always

post consistently and you cannot control their own message, but they can be an excellent source of spreading your message among the sphere of social media.

In the same token, YouTube has also made your campaign speeches and message accessible to all. There are no such thing as “off the record comments” on YouTube. Bloggers and internet-savvy individuals will record everything, many times without your knowledge, and post it. This can be a wonderful campaign tool to support your message. Friendly individuals can record your campaign message and speeches and post them on the internet for you to give you additional coverage to a wider audience, all for free.

YouTube should also give you pause as anything you say could be taken out of context and posted all over the internet. The last thing you need is to have a “gorilla journalist” post some unflattering remarks you tell a supporter behind the stage and for the video to go viral over social media.

### Facebook:

It is the year 2015. Candidates must have Facebook fan pages!

There is no easier way to have people follow your campaign, see you at events, and share your message to their friends. There are many examples of how Facebook has redefined how a candidate can broadcast their message and win on a low budget campaign. There are also many in the business associations or PAC's who will not donate to candidates for state offices if the candidate does not have a Facebook page that maintains fresh content and has hundreds of supporters on the page.

Candidates should share their press releases on Facebook. Candidates should share photos of their campaign events on Facebook. The campaign website should link directly to Facebook and vice-versa to share the campaign message. Candidates should interact with people on Facebook so they know you are genuine and not a stuffed suit. Facebook gives you the opportunity to be real and share your message among real people, at least as real as we can get on social media. ;-)

Each person on your campaign, but especially your communications director (or social media director if you have a separate person), needs to have a smart phone that can take photos and upload them directly to your Facebook page with limited supervision.

Facebook can also be programmed with targeted advertisements to boost your page or individual posts. This does cost money, but is important to gain traction in social media circles. With the additional attention comes the additional comments, so be mindful of comments and have somebody assigned to answer questions and comments and to remove inappropriate comments from the page.

## Twitter:

It is the year 2015. Candidates must have Facebook fan pages and Twitter accounts!

Twitter allows you to broadcast your message, in 140 characters or less, to anybody who chooses to listen. You can share links to your website, you can share links to interviews or newspaper stories, and you can share information about what is happening in government that impacts the office you are running for. You can share videos or photos of your campaign instantly.

Each person on your campaign, but especially your communications director (or social media director if you have a separate person), needs to have a smart phone that can take photos and upload them directly to your Facebook page and broadcast them through your Twitter account with supervision of the candidate and campaign manager.

I think some things are worth repeating obviously.

## Campaign materials:

Along with television, this will be the most expensive part of your campaign. Your campaign materials are a vital part of your overall communications strategy. Campaigns are all about name identification and associating your name with your desired office. Some of the campaign materials you will likely need:

- Yard signs
- 4 ft. x 8 ft. signs
- Push cards/palm cards (concise information on your campaign with a good photo)
- Pamphlets (not as critical, but will provide more information than a push card)
- Business cards with correct campaign contact information listed
- Bumper stickers (1 sticker is worth \$100 in advertising)
- Door hangers for precinct chairmen
- Direct mail pieces
- Post cards (not required, but can be cheap and effective)
- T-shirts and baseball caps (build camaraderie among campaign volunteers, but not a necessity)
- Beer mugs (good for the post campaign celebration, but also not necessary)

## Free Media

This is a high priority for the campaign. Daily press releases will be e-mailed to the local newspaper, televisions and radio stations. Social media must be used to broadcast these press releases as well as updates on your campaign with the grassroots leaders.

All interviews will be recorded by the campaign to insure the media does not misquote you.

Updated media kits are to be mailed to all media sources or carried to each event you attend.

The campaign should institute a number of programs to generate free media. These should each be broadcast on social media whenever possible.

- Endorsements from popular elected officials and nonelected officials
- Letters-to-the-Editor
- Fundraisers
- Radio talk shows
- Precinct chairmen
- Grassroots organizers who host events

### **Paid Media**

This will be the most expensive portion of the campaign. Approximately 80 percent of the money raised will be spent on paid media. This will include television, radio, direct mail, phone banks, bumper strips, billboards, newspaper ads, yard signs, 4x8 signs, campaign buttons, palm cards, brochures and door hangers.

#### **Campaign Materials:**

The direct mail pieces that your campaign sends out will save resources by appropriately targeting the mailings. We can already count on the Republican primary voters to vote for you in the general election and therefore, mailings to that group will be limited. In a primary election, however, direct mail should focus on Republican primary voters as these will be the most likely to vote in the upcoming primary. You should also mail to senior citizens, churchgoers, veterans, independent voters, and any other list the campaign can acquire.

Mailings will be targeted according to the county or counties. Mailings will also include postcard sized get-out-the-vote messages. Other postcards will include a pro-candidate message and given to volunteers. The volunteers will be asked to mail (including postage) the postcards to family, friends and neighbors. The postcards will be signed by the volunteers to get the personal touch.

For the primary election, yard signs should be purchased in October and November and distributed to supporters during December and January. For the general election, yard signs will be purchased in late August and distributed after Labor Day through Election Day. Yard signs will be given to supporters beginning in late September. Additionally, these signs will be used for rallies, media events, fundraising events and any other event as necessary.

The campaign will purchase buttons to be distributed to volunteers and supporters. The campaign will not purchase a large quantity of these. Money can be spent better elsewhere.

Bumper stickers are a great source of name ID as long as they are put on cars and not in a desk drawer. There will be blitzes to make sure the bumper stickers are placed on cars. This can be done at the high school football games, GOP events and at your own fundraisers. They will also be mailed to contributors.

In the late summer of the election year, the campaign will make sure that large 4x8 signs are up around the district. They will need to be assembled with lumber. Volunteers should put these signs together and place them in the best locations possible, but with the consent of the local property owner. **Check local ordinances to verify where campaign signs can in fact be placed as some localities have time, place, and manner restrictions to avoid cluttering polling locations that double as official buildings.**

Brochures will be left for distribution at the campaign headquarters, media events, fundraisers and other events as necessary. They will also be passed out on precinct walks. These brochures will be inexpensive but professional looking.

## **Scheduling/Community Involvement**

### **How do I effectively manage my Campaign Time?**

Scheduling is a two-pronged question. The first portion is the hard deadline of the election and what steps you should be taking at each step of the way to win the election. The second portion is making sure you schedule activities within the district that will help you get your name and campaign message out to voters and interest groups.

#### **Campaign Events:**

One of the most critical things to do is to schedule meetings with civic leaders, other Republican local elected officials, and business leaders. They need to know who you are and that your policies and vision will help them be more successful. You will also learn a lot from them in their experiences with government and previous campaigns.

These meetings can simply be coffees or lunches.

You will also need to schedule social time for your campaign volunteers and to meet new volunteers. This can be a coffee or happy hour.

Your campaign manager and scheduler should identify all the important community events within the district. Some questions to ask:

- Is there a July 4 parade? Are there multiple July 4 parades?
- What is the schedule for the local high school football games? Is it OK to park a truck at the game with campaign signs on the truck?
- Is there a town festival that I can set up a booth at? Do I need to be a member of the local chamber of commerce to set up a booth?
- Which community leaders will typically endorse or openly support candidates? How can I schedule time with them?
- Are there businesses that will support me openly that have clear visibility from prominent polling locations (such as the county courthouse)?
- Which civic organizations, such as Rotary Clubs or Lions Clubs, could I speak at during the course of the campaign?
- Is there a large urban versus rural split within the district? How can I schedule events to reach out to both areas effectively?
- When does the local Republican Party Executive Committee meet? This would be a good opportunity to meet the precinct chairmen and demonstrate your conservative Republican credentials.

Your volunteers can help you identify these areas. Your campaign manager should research these and place the most important ones on your campaign schedule.

**Election Schedules:**

For purposes of a campaign schedule, you will typically work backwards from the hard deadline of Election Day. The first Election Day to look at is the primary election.

---

**March 1, 2016 (Primary Election Day)**

- Polls are properly manned on Election Day and signs are placed at polling locations.
- Ballot Integrity
- Transportation of voters to the polls
- Victory Party

**February 25 – February 29, 2016 (Early Voting Period)**

- Final weekend of get-out-the-vote (GOTV) efforts in targeting precincts.
- Phoning (volunteer) favorable voters to vote.
- Door-to-door campaigning in targeted neighborhoods.
- Post information about Election Day polling locations on campaign website and social media.

**February 15 - 27, 2016 (Early voting period)**

- Polls are properly manned on Election Day and signs are placed at polling locations.
- Target likely voters in neighborhoods to remind them to vote. Remove actual primary voters from your voter lists to avoid duplicitous contacts as they vote.
- GOTV efforts in precincts.
- Post information about early voting polling locations on social media and campaign website.
- Post photos on social media of you meeting voters at the polls during early voting (stage these so as not to catch people off guard).

## **February 1 – February 15, 2016**

- Promote your candidacy in every way possible.
- Utilize social media at least daily with campaign updates.
- Final direct mail drop to supporters and key target groups.
- GOTV efforts in all/targeted precincts.
- Continue paid media spots where possible. Many people vote early.

## **December 14, 2015 – January 31, 2016**

- Increase free media hits. Make sure social media is buzzing daily with campaign updates.
- Begin paid media spots on via TV and radio. Begin all get-out-the-vote efforts.
- Run positive media buys where possible and affordable. Do TV ads if the campaign can afford it. If not, do radio to build name ID and favorable image.
- Coordinate a large, grassroots volunteer effort. Hold a news conference with grassroots and some recognizable figures such as elected officials, business leaders and other opinion leaders to talk about the strength of the campaign. Begin a door-to-door walk.
- Organize literature drops and bumper sticker distribution.
- Designate targeted precinct chairman (all appointed by the campaign) to help with GOTV efforts.
- Use phone banks to make advocacy calls.
- **Register people to vote using deputy voter registrars up until the registration deadline.**

## **November 14, 2015 – December 14, 2015**

- Candidate filing period.
- Hold press conference in the district to announce your filing for office. Put up large 4x8 signs district wide upon filing.
- Raise money from people in the district, especially prominent individuals. Also, seek money from large Republican donors outside of district if possible. Set up fundraising events for December and January.

### **September 1, 2015 – November 14, 2015**

- Make the decision to run for office with your family and decide on which office to seek.
  - File the appointment of a treasurer form with the Texas Ethics Commission and begin fundraising with your core group of supporters.
  - Begin to invent a district-wide grassroots organization effort during this time, including recruiting volunteers and appointing precinct chairman, etc.
  - Hire a campaign manager that knows the district and begin seeking additional campaign staff.
  - Develop a campaign website and social media sites.
  - Make sure the finance organization is up and running by late October.
- 

### **November 8, 2016 (General Election Day)**

- Polls are properly manned on Election Day
- Ballot Integrity (in conjunction with local Republican Party)
- Transportation to the polls
- Victory Party

### **November 3 – November 7, 2016**

- Final weekend of GOTV in targeted precincts. This will mostly be literature drops in conjunction with precinct chairmen.
- Phoning favorable voters and Republicans to vote who have not already voted early.

### **October 24 – November 4, 2016 (early voting)**

- Heavy contrast media (mail, radio and TV).
- Final direct mail drop to supporters and key target groups.
- GOTV in targeted precincts.
- Campaign events in specific areas to spur on early voting. Each campaign event should be well planned and have good turnout. Take pictures that enhance turnout for social media.
- Post information about early voting polling locations on social media and campaign website.

### **October 1-24, 2016**

- Increase free media hits on your campaign and contrast your Democrat opponent (radio, press releases, letters-to-the-editor)
- Begin paid media spots on your campaign and contrast your Democrat opponent via TV and radio. Begin direct mail (GOTV).
- Schedule campaign events in the district to attract swing voters.
- Be mindful of possible debate dates in the community. This will be a strategy unto itself. Scheduling a town hall event may make better use of your time than a debate and would not allow your opponent to get their side of the debate in.

### **September 1-30, 2016**

- Run positive media buys if affordable and possible.
- Coordinate a large, grassroots volunteer effort. Hold a news conference with grassroots and some recognizable figures such as elected officials, business leaders and other opinion leaders to talk about the strength of the campaign. Begin a door-to-door walk in all top turnout precincts.
- Organize literature drops and bumper sticker distribution at selected high schools each Friday night.
- Designate targeted precinct chairman (all appointed by the campaign) to help deliver first literature drop.
- Use phone banks to make advocacy calls.
- Promote all campaign activities through social media.
- **Register people to vote using deputy voter registrars up until the registration deadline.**

### **July 15 – September 1, 2016**

- Tour the district and meet business and civic leaders.
- Collect all 2010 and 2012 primary data of the district.
- Put up large 4x8 signs district wide in late August. Check city ordinances for any time, place, and manner restrictions. Only place 4x8 signs where you have express permission from the landowner.
- Continue to raise money from local businessmen. Also, seek money from large donors and other GOP candidates that do not have general election challengers. Set up fundraising events for September and October.
- Begin to reinvent a countywide organization effort during this slow time, including recruiting volunteers and appointing precinct chairman, etc.
- Schedule a campaign event with all the Republican Party precinct chairmen and grassroots leaders in your district to get them on board for the general election in early August.
- Early polling plan completed.
- Print fresh campaign materials for the general election.

## Fundraising

### How do I raise sufficient funds for the campaign?

We need to first reiterate that you must follow applicable state and federal laws with respect to fundraising.

**Before** becoming a candidate *or* announcing your candidacy, we urge you to contact the Texas Ethics Commission for information on campaign contribution reports, the appointment of a campaign treasurer, and personal financial statements that you may be required to file. The Commission may be reached at the following address:

Texas	Ethics	Commission
P.O. Austin, 1-800-325-8506	Box TX	12070 78711-2070

#### Appointment of a Campaign Treasurer:

The **first** thing a prospective candidate must do after making the decision to run for public office is to file an appointment of a campaign treasurer.

#### Filing Campaign Financial Reports:

If you are running for a federal office, such as United States Representative, all paperwork shall be submitted to the Federal Elections Commission.

If you are running for a state or district race, such as Texas Senator, the paperwork shall be submitted to the Texas Ethics Commission.

If you are running for a county or precinct position, such as County Judge, the paperwork shall be submitted to your county's elections administrator, such as the County Clerk.

If you are running for a district office that is in only one county, such as District Judge, the paperwork shall be submitted to the Texas Ethics Commission and the County Clerk.

Forms & Instructions for *Non-judicial* candidates  
<http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/filinginfo/cohfrm.htm>

Forms & Instructions for *Judicial* candidates  
<http://www.ethics.state.tx.us/filinginfo/jcohfrm.htm>

### **The Need to Fundraise Locally:**

Fundraising is a skill that many do not possess. This is where your vision, your campaign, and your marketing skills will pay off, maybe quite literally. There are many candidates who have a difficult time selling themselves to donors. Asking for money is very challenging for many people as it is not in their personality. But, to be a successful candidate and win your race, fundraising is critical. As a candidate you must be able to ask for the sale (donations) if you cannot do this you should not run.

Fundraising is critical even for those candidates that can self-finance their own campaigns through loans or personal finances. Donations show support of your campaign. It is better to have 1000 - \$25 donations reported (\$25,000) than to have one donation of \$25,000. By campaigning and sharing your message, people become more engaged in your campaign. A donation, however small are large, indicates that individuals have bought in to your campaign, quite literally they take ownership in the race. A donation is many times better than a personal endorsement on an email list as the donation means an individual has sacrificed for your campaign and is willing to sacrifice to see you elected. This is why small donations from within the district are so critical.

There are many individuals who cannot give a large lump sum, but want to contribute. Ask these people if they would be willing to pledge a smaller monthly contribution to your campaign, say \$20 per month for 5 months. This totals \$100 for the year, but they will also be listed on your campaign finance report 5 separate times and the donor will be able to personally connect with you as the candidate 5 separate times to gauge progress, ask questions, and provide feedback. This allows the donor to contribute not just financially but also in information sharing about the progress of the campaign to their neighbors and friends.

It is also wise to set up an online donation page on your campaign website. For a small collection fee, many companies like Pyrix will handle your online donations, format your reports of donations, and deposit the funds directly into your campaign account. This is a very effective way to solicit contributions and allow your campaign team to market your donation link to solicit contributions.

For campaign contributions made by individuals, it is wise to write and send thank you cards. Professional organizations do not necessarily need a thank you card, but individuals who sacrifice for your campaign should be made to feel appreciated.

The local in-district donations are vital to the success of a campaign as they show local support. Small donations in the district will also allow you to show support for your campaign to large donors. Having more substantial contributions (\$1000+) from businesses in the district will be a major factor for showing support and having the resources to win.

### **Fundraising from Large Political Action Committees:**

Fundraising with large donors is more challenging. If you are challenging an incumbent, you will need to convince large donors (generally political action committees for corporations or associations) that you have the ability to win based on your message, performance in the district, and creating a contrast between you and your Democrat opponent.

The boards that make decisions for PAC's look at races much differently than the average voter in the district. These meetings need to be scheduled and you need to be prepared. Many times they will ask policy questions related to their primary issues, such as doctors asking questions relating to medical regulations, and they will evaluate you based on your knowledge of the district and nuances of the issue. Having a substantial list of small donors in the district will help to show support for your campaign. Having a Facebook page with lots of "likes" and lots of activity in the district also shows that you have support for your campaign. Many of these PAC's will look to see if you have or are willing to have your own skin in the game, too. If you are willing to loan yourself money to win, they will see that you have made a personal investment in your own campaign.

Large donors can greatly assist a campaign. They can provide enough resources to pay for last minute mailers, television ads, or printed materials. If particular individuals hesitate to donate, gently follow up with them, but do not press or blame them. Large donors from PAC's see a donation to your campaign purely as a business decision in many cases. If you have a good chance of winning, they will see a donation as a good return on investment. If they perceive you do not have a good chance of winning, they will see a donation as a poor return on investment and may not make a contribution at this time. It is best to not burn bridges with these groups.

In races down the ballot (county level), it is best to focus on smaller donors and business leaders within the district. The PAC's typically get involved in races in large urban counties and in state level races.

## Budgeting

### How do I plan a campaign budget?

Living and operating within a budget is the hardest thing anybody has to do, no matter if its corporate, government, personal, or campaign finances.

The biggest thing to keep in mind throughout the campaign is there is a good chance you will have to take time off work to campaign. That leads to three sets of questions to ask of yourself:

1. Will my employer allow me extended time off to campaign? Do I have enough vacation time to allow me to campaign? Are there any company policies (i.e.: Hatch Act) that I would potentially violate if I run for office and would that prevent me from working at all during the campaign? How do I sustain my family during this period?
2. Do I have sufficient personal funds to sustain my family during the campaign? Does my spouse work and have insurance coverage to maintain us in the event I have to quit my job or take an extended leave of absence during the campaign? (Keep in mind if you have to switch to your spouse's insurance, you may have to do this during their window of opportunity to make insurance plan changes as much as 15-18 months prior to the election.)
3. How much have candidates for this same position spent in previous races? Were they successful? What did they spend their money on? Look at campaign finance reports for every candidate in the previous 2-3 election cycles to see what they spent.

Once you know answers to each of these questions, you can get a better idea of how much money you need to spend and therefore raise to make the campaign successful. As a general rule of thumb, below is a chart that shows general campaign expenses for successful campaigns for various races in the 2012 election cycle:

Race	Campaign Expenses	Notes
2012 U.S. Congress (open seat)	\$2.5 million	Challengers may spend as much as winners.
2014 Railroad Commissioner (open seat)	\$2.5 million on average	Lowest level of statewide office-holder. Governor, Lt. Gov, and AG's race will run \$10 million for each.
2014 State Senate (open seat)	\$1 - \$1.5 million	Varies depending on region and number of primary opponents.

2014 State Representative (open seat)	\$100,000 - \$800,000	Depends on whether there is a general election opponent and whether there is a runoff election.
2014 County Commissioner (urban seat)	\$100,000	Varies depending on county. Judicial races in many counties will be similar.
2014 County Commissioner (rural seat)	\$40,000	

### Sample Campaign Budget

#### (Based on 2014 State Representative Race in Suburban Area in Open Seat)

\*Campaign expenses for actual candidates and campaigns were reviewed, but no information from an individual campaign was directly used.

#### Organization

Consulting fees*	\$ 80,000
Staff/contract salaries	\$ 22,500
Travel	\$ 4,000
Volunteer fund	\$ 2,000
Office equipment (phones, computers, copier, shredder)	\$ 200
Office supplies (paper, pens, paper clips, etc...)	\$ 2,000
Telephone/Data Plan	\$ 1,200
Miscellaneous	\$ 4,500
Total:	\$ 116,400

#### Communications

Brochures	\$ 10,000
Bumper stickers/buttons	\$ 500
Yard signs	\$ 7,000
Direct mail	\$ 94,500
Print ads	\$ 3,000
Website/social media	\$ 4,000
Total:	\$ 119,000

#### Events

Fundraising	\$ 5,000
Expenses	\$ 8,000
Total:	\$ 13,000

**TOTAL BUDGET:** **\$ 248,000**

#### \*Note:

Consultant fees are not broken down as different consultants provide different services. Consulting services includes design and production of campaign materials, production of radio and television advertisements, opposition research, and provision of voter databases, communications, and issues research.

## **Grassroots Engagement**

### **What can I expect from the local Republican Party to help me win my race?**

#### **Grassroots Volunteers:**

The major need of every campaign is manpower. You need manpower to put up signs, to man the polls to hand out materials on election day, to block walk and make phone calls, to help organize voter lists and identify voters, and to keep your schedule in order as a candidate. This takes effort. You cannot do all of this yourself as a candidate, nor should you.

How you get manpower is the real question. Many of the high profile state campaigns will hire some part-time people to accomplish many of these goals. A campaign that is built to win, however, relies on volunteers that buy into your campaign's message and buy into you as a candidate. If you can find that perfect harmony of where your campaign, your strength as a candidate, and your values align with the values of the base of the Republican Party, grassroots volunteers will make themselves available. These grassroots volunteers are the backbone of a strong campaign, whether it is a primary or general election.

Grassroots volunteers, which include many precinct chairmen, need to have organization from the campaign manager or the grassroots coordinator. These volunteers likely know some of the neighborhoods in your district better than you do, so trust their judgment and let them contact their neighbors in the way they know how to. Your campaign needs to have materials ready to campaign including voter contact lists and campaign materials. Many volunteers will feel more like a team if you provide them t-shirts or baseball caps. Many volunteers will make their homes a central hub for campaign activities which will include meet-and-greets with neighbors, a staging area for yard signs, or host block-walk efforts on weekends.

Each candidate engages their base of supporters differently, but each campaign needs to thank the volunteers through including them in some low-level campaign decisions, providing them snacks and drinks at events, and having a campaign social time or party where you can personally show them your thanks. If you do not appreciate volunteers, they will feel as if they are taken advantage of and their motivation will dwindle.

#### **Party Resources:**

During a contested the primary election, the Republican Party will generally not provide resources to either candidate so as not to show partiality. Some county chairmen and precinct chairmen may give personal endorsements, but the party as a whole usually tries to have a sense of neutrality.

During the general election, the party will assist candidates in winning. Resources vary by race, county, and needs. For example, a Congressional race in a district that votes 75% Republican will typically not receive support from the Republican Party. On the other hand, a candidate for county commissioner in an open seat in a county in which the race is a swing district may receive everything from direct campaign assistance through volunteers to direct financial contributions from the Candidate Resource Committee.

The party also has Republican Party materials available and micro-targeted voter lists available to assist candidates in contacting voters. The party can also refer you to individuals who specialize in television or print media in your region that can help you develop affordable and quality advertisements.

The grassroots engagement always starts and ends with you the candidate. Volunteers will only engage if you choose to engage them and show them respect in the process. The minute you take a volunteer for granted or fail to return a phone call from a precinct chairman is the day you begin to lose touch with the grassroots.

## **Winning**

### **What legal challenges could I expect in a tight race? What now?**

First off, congratulations! You have either won your campaign or you have finished reading all the way through this point.

Here is one last thing to be mindful of with regards to an election...what do you need to be mindful of in a close election?

#### **Close Election:**

There are many times when a race is decided by a small handful of votes. In these cases, a recount may be requested by either candidate. If a candidate won by less than 10% of the votes, a recount may be requested. Recounts can be expensive, so please seek the counsel of the local or state Republican Party immediately when election results are available to see if a recount is justified and to check the cost.

The Secretary of State's office lists the [procedure](#) for a recount election, so I will send you straight to their link for the details. You must request a recount within 5 days of the election date, so this has to be a quick decision. You will have to review the election results precinct by precinct to see if there are any anomalies that would justify a recount as well. These results are available through your county elections office.

If you have documented voter fraud or intimidation (this needs to be documented by election judges and poll watchers), you may also contest the election in court. This is a much more complicated procedure and I will defer to the general counsel of the Republican Party of Texas and other election law attorneys for this information. There are very specific deadlines for investigating and prosecuting voter fraud cases.

#### **Governing:**

The last thing I want to leave you with is governing. All elected officials are mindful of campaigns and mindful of their districts. Governing is not campaigning on a higher scale, though.

The first thing you will need to do if you win is to hire staff around you for the office that are capable of handling the office responsibilities and policies that the office handles. There is a much different mindset among staff responsibilities in the official office versus the campaign office and not everybody can transition between the two worlds effectively as staff.

The Attorney Generals' office will provide you with open records and open meetings training for elected officials. You should also make sure you are cognizant of the ethics boundaries of the

office you are elected to, i.e. campaign finance moratoriums and limitations, prohibition on using the official office and taxpayer funds for campaign purposes, etc.

If you should have questions regarding your election or need campaign resources, please contact the Republican Party of Texas at:

[www.texasgop.org](http://www.texasgop.org)

Republican Party of Texas

1108 Lavaca Ave, Suite 500

Austin, TX 78701

512-477-9821

## **SELF EVALUATION OF YOUR POTENTIAL CANDIDACY**

### **I. CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE DECIDING TO SEEK OFFICE**

**First and foremost, you should have the qualifications necessary for the office you are seeking.**

In addition, you must be able to:

- Withstand the emotional, physical and financial demands of a campaign
- Identify with people and possess leadership qualities
- Have dedicated support of at least 6-10 people and of family members.

Before running, you should ask yourself the following questions and answer each honestly and with thoughtful consideration.

1. What is your public image?
2. How self-confident are you?
3. How open are you to public scrutiny of your personal and financial situation?
4. Can you confront any skeletons in your closet?
5. How do you deal with criticism?
6. What are your communication abilities?
7. Do you feel confident asking for volunteer help, money, and votes?
8. What is the condition of your health and your family's health?
9. How will lengthy separations affect you and your family?
10. Can your family stand up to criticisms of you?
11. How do you and your family respond to pressure and stress?
12. Do you have the financial resources to run for office?

13. Can you take a leave of absence from your job if necessary?
14. How much of your own money can you contribute to the campaign?
15. Can you get financial commitments from members of your family?
16. Can you afford your family's living expenses if you are not working for a period of time?
17. What type of support can you get from friends, business associates, and professional/service organizations?
18. Do you have the capacity to let yourself be managed by others?
19. Do you have the ability to delegate and let things be done by others?
20. What prior experience do you have to help you with the position you're seeking?
21. Are you able to ask for money?
22. Do you have access/contact with the financial/donor community of the district or with a group willing to donate money to the campaign?
23. Do you have some base of support – political, financial, or ideological?
24. Do you want to win seriously enough to make the sacrifices required?

After considering the above-noted questions and your answers you still want to seek political office, consider the following before making your announcement.

## **II. CONSIDERATIONS BEFORE ANNOUNCING YOUR CANDIDACY**

One of the questions most frequently asked by individuals thinking about becoming candidates is: When I should I announce my candidacy? You should make your announcement when you are ready and for no other reason.

One problem found in almost every unsuccessful campaign is that the candidate was not prepared to run from the outset of his or her campaign. How then does a prospective candidate know that he or she is ready to throw his or her hat into the ring? One way to determine your preparedness is by taking the following test. The assessment test is divided into three segments with questions corresponding to areas of your daily life: Personal, Civic, and Political. In grading yourself, each right answer is worth two (2) points unless otherwise indicated. (*The answer key and score chart are located at the end of the test.*)

### **PERSONAL:**

1. Do your spouse and family support your candidacy?
2. Are you prepared to devote as many as 18 hours per day to your campaign?
3. Will your job or employer present an obstacle to your ability to devote the time required to run an effective campaign?
4. Are you physically able to meet the challenges that a campaign will present?
5. Is there anything in your background that could become an embarrassment to you or to your campaign?
  - A. Have you ever been arrested or charged with a serious crime?
  - B. Have you ever declared bankruptcy?

- C. Are your taxes paid?
  - D. Have you ever been divorced or are you contemplating one?
  - E. Do you have any criminal or civil suits pending?
  - F. Will a conflict of interest (perceived or actual) arise as a result of your candidacy?
  - G. Have you voted in the last three elections?
6. Do you have the personal resources to invest in your own campaign?
7. Are you willing to invest any of your personal funds in the campaign?
8. Have you taken steps to prepare your image as a candidate? (Speech or public speaking lessons, video coaching, etc.)
9. Do you presently reside in the district in which you intend to run?
10. How long have you lived in the district?
- A.  Less than a year
  - B.  2 years or less
  - C.  less than 5 years but more than 2 years
  - D.  5 years or more
11. Do you subscribe to and read the local newspapers?
12. Have you developed a network of friends upon whom you can call for assistance in your campaign?
13. Have you considered the possibility that you might not win?

**CIVIC:**

14. Are you actively involved in community or civic affairs or have you been a member of a local service club or organization for at least the past two years?
  
15. Do you or have you served as a member of any advisory board, agency, or committee in your community or on the state level?
  
16. Have you developed a list of service clubs and charity organizations that are active in your community? (Names of officers, dates, & locations of monthly meetings, and friends who are active)
  
17. Do you know the type of service provided or work performed by these organizations?
  
18. If you and your spouse have any children of school age, is either of you active in school associations? (PTA, etc.)
  
19. Have you attended meetings of the governmental body for which you seek election?
  
20. Have you developed a file on the major issues or resolutions presented at these meetings?
  
21. Do you know and can briefly and succinctly define the job responsibilities of the office you are seeking?
  
22. How many times has a picture of or story about you appeared in the local papers, in connection with a charitable or civic event, during the past two years?

- |  |  |
|--|--|
| A. <input type="checkbox"/> None         | C. <input type="checkbox"/> 5 to 10 times      |
| B. <input type="checkbox"/> 1 to 5 times | D. <input type="checkbox"/> More than 10 times |

23. How well do you know your district?
- A. Do you know the locations of the high schools, the nicknames of the teams, and where and when they play?
  - B. Do you know the locations of major shopping malls and other large, public gathering sites?
  - C. Do you know drive times and distances between points throughout the district?
  - D. Do you know the location of major factories or plant sites and times of shift changes?
  - E. Do you know what newspapers cover your district?
  - F. Do you know the name of the editor?
  - G. Do you know the reporters who normally cover politics or campaigns?
  - H. Do you know the major employers in your district?
  - I. Do you know the names of their chief executives?
  - J. Are you aware of topics of controversy in specific portions of or throughout the district?
  - K. Are you prepared to take a position on or discuss these issues?
  - L. Can you identify the major churches or synagogues in your district?
  - M. Do you know the names of the pastors, ministers, or rabbis?
24. Are you an active member of a church or synagogue?

**POLITICAL:**

25. Have you worked for the Republican Party as a Committeeman or Committeewoman, or have you had any other Party involvement over the past four years?
26. Have you taken an active role in the campaign of another Republican candidate or candidates?
27. Do you know any of your local Republican elected officials?
28. Have you sought their advice and support for your candidacy?
29. Do you know any of the Republican Party leaders in your community?
30. Have you sought their advice and support for your candidacy?
31. Have you written a Campaign Plan?
32. Have you developed a Campaign Budget?
33. Have you written a Campaign Finance Plan?
34. Are you prepared to fill the following positions with people who are dedicated to your election?
  - A. Campaign Manager
  - B. Finance Chairman
  - C. Volunteer Chairman
  - D. Treasurer (RQD by state law)
  - E. Scheduler
  - F. Finance Committee  
(minimum 5-7 members)
35. Have you begun opposition research on your opponent's record(s)?

36. Are you prepared to respond to questions from the press or from candidate evaluation committees?
37. Do you have a position on abortion?
38. Have you ever had a difference of opinion with any group that might cause them to publicly work against your candidacy?
39. Have you given some thought to your own relative strengths and weaknesses?
40. Have you given some thoughts to your opponents' relative strengths and weaknesses?
41. Can you, in no more than 30 seconds, make a statement both as to why you are running for office and why people should vote for you?
42. Are you prepared to carry on a campaign following your announcement? (Do you have a campaign phone number, headquarters site(s), letterhead, campaign material, etc?)

#### **ANSWER KEY**

1-Y; 2-Y; 3-N; 4-Y; 5A-N; 5B-N; 5C-Y; 5D-N; 5E-N; 5F-N; 5G-Y; 6-9-all Y; 10A-O pts; 10B-2 pts; 10C-4 pts; 10D-6 pts; 11-21-all Y; 22A-0 pts; 22B-2 pts; 22C-4 pts; 22D-6 pts; 23-2 pts for each Y; 24-30-all Y; 31-Y-add 10 pts, N-deduct 10 pts; 32-Y-add 10 pts, N-deduct 10 pts; 33-Y-add 10 pts, N-deduct 10 pts; 34-2 pts for each Y; 35-37-all Y; 38-N; 39-42-all Y.

A perfect score is 162 points.

145 points or more = you can begin to draft your announcement speech.

129-145 points = you are on your way, but there is still a great deal of work to be done before you are ready.

112-129 = you are clearly not ready but you may be able to finish your preparations in time to begin a credible campaign.

Less than 112 = you ought to consider waiting until the next election cycle to become a candidate.