



THE ESSENTIAL GUIDE TO BEING ELECTED

INCREASING WOMEN'S REPRESENTATION



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The Essential Guide to Being Elected: Increasing Women's representation

This guide has been made possible by the generosity of Shirley Greenberg, Ottawa philanthropist, lawyer and strong supporter of women.

2015



Dear Readers:

On the eve of the 2015 federal election, many women are watching politics very closely. Election outcomes matter as it is our legislatures that determine key policies and programs that affect the quality of life of individuals in communities across the country. Increasingly, voters are looking for candidates with whom they can identify – and, notably, Canadians are eager to see far more women on the ballot.

Running for office can feel intimidating and challenging – for nearly everyone. Regardless, we need far more women to consider the prospect. Women from a variety of backgrounds have the potential to be excellent candidates. Further, on average, women comprise just 25 percent of seats at the federal and municipal levels. Provincially, the level of representation varies between 37 percent and 16 percent. In short, women to be represented in larger numbers at all levels of public office in Canada.

We encourage you to consider seeking office - without waiting to be asked. You have unique perspectives to bring to the table. This guide, is designed to help provide you with a roadmap for the process. Now you need to take the driver's seat. Across the country, elected women are working hard here are to bring their talents and diverse perspectives to the table. These women are your role models - and are very often willing to spend time talking about their experiences and sharing tips.

We have created the guide, with the generous support of Shirley Greenberg, who has been a strong supporter of women seeking public office. It is a continuation of the significant investment of volunteer time and energy that early leaders of Equal Voice made in its program, Getting to the Gate.

A special thanks to Deborah Nurse and Leigh-Ann who undertook the research and writing to create this guide. Finally, to all of those women who gave us input and time to make the guide better, thank you. appreciate all of your efforts and wisdom.

And to you, our readers, we wish you every success as you contemplate embarking on this important journey .

Clare Beckton

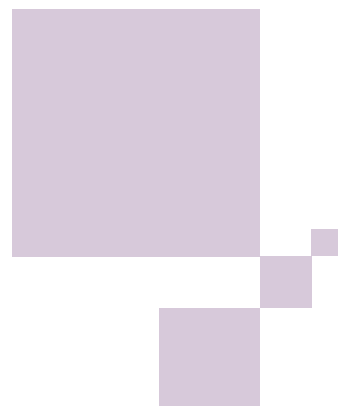
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SO YOU ARE THINKING OF RUNNING FOR OFFICE. CONGRATULATIONS!

These are interesting and dynamic times for women in Canadian politics. Women are increasingly throwing their hat into the political ring. Political parties are seeking out more women to run in elections, in an effort to diversify their slate of candidates. There are 77 women in the Canadian House of Commons (25 per cent) as of November 2014. The average percentage of females in the legislature across the provinces stands at 25 per cent, with British Columbia, Alberta and Ontario boasting the highest numbers of females participating in the legislature.

Even though it is easier than in the past, running for office remains a challenge for many women. At the provincial level, 2014 saw the number of female premiers reduced from five to two. Recent data has also shown that women

experience difficulty seeking elected office at each level of government. While it might be an uphill battle, it is one that is worth the risk, with potential for great rewards. But what do you need to know on entering the world of politics? How can females differentiate themselves from their male counterparts? What characteristics are Canadians looking for in their elected leaders?

This guide is intended to answer these questions – and more! It will cover topics ranging from the distinction between provincial and federal elections, to electability strategies for female politicians. It will also encourage healthy introspection, by asking you to critically examine your own strengths and weaknesses as well as identifying what makes you stand out from the pack.

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GETTING STARTED: MAKING THE DECISION

Knowing the ins and outs of politics

The first element of the decision-making process is choosing which level of government participation best suits your skills, desires and interests. Levels of political engagement in Canada are divided into federal, provincial, territorial, municipal governments and band governments (while we will not discuss band governments, much of the advice will be relevant). Let's discuss the pros and cons of serving at each level of governmental politics.

Municipal Government

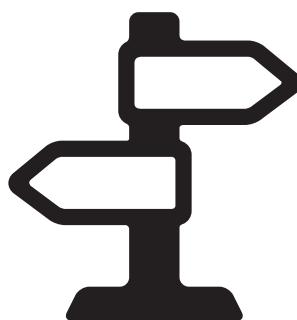
Many candidates enter provincial or federal politics without municipal experience. However, starting at the municipal level provides the space to build your support base and become known for voicing concerns on issues

that are important to you. It can also be an incubation period to test and hone your skills.

Often understood as the first rung of electoral politics, the municipal system also provides you with an excellent opportunity to tackle local issues 'first-hand' and 'head-on'. Most municipal candidates are not formally aligned with the major parties (Montreal and Vancouver being the only exceptions). The financial burden tends to be lower for municipal elections. Many municipal contests have far more candidates than

federal or provincial elections do, which can mean that far fewer votes are needed to win at the municipal level.

Given the (formal) absence of political parties at the municipal level, your values and passion can be pursued



without adherence to partisan policies. As such, personal characteristics, ethical positions and personal presentation to the electorate become very important.

A typical municipality elects several councillors, and a reeve, mayor or warden. Councillors generally represent a “ward” of a municipality (the exception is Vancouver where councillors are elected citywide), while the mayor is the highest position at the municipal level. School board trustees are also elected at the municipal level; these contests are often the entry point for new politicians, especially women. School board elections are generally the least expensive.

Serving as a councillor allows you the opportunity to be close to your home base. However, your power is limited by provincial legislation. Canadian municipalities have no legal standing in the constitution: their governance, operational organisation and management, are determined by the province (Section 92(8) of the Constitution Act, 1867). “In each Province the Legislature may exclusively make Laws in relation to... Municipal Institutions in the Province”. Provincial legislation also regulates the municipal electoral system and strictly controls municipal powers to draft regulations and by-laws. While the position of mayor is the highest municipal-level position, mayors may have little power outside of the municipal council. As a councillor, you can have a presence and impact on the local issues that affect the day to day lives of those around you.

Provincial Government

The provincial level is often perceived as the ‘middle level’ of government, even though the Constitution frames both the provincial and the federal system as equal. However, the division of legislative powers, the centralization of the federal government, and limited financial resources have led to a subordination of provincial powers relative to those found at the federal level. This is reinforced by

the primacy of the federal government over national fiscal governance, international and inter-provincial trade, and its ability to override the provinces in national emergencies. In addition to controlling most municipal activities, the Constitution states that provinces are responsible for areas such as provincial taxation, health care, education, social services, penal institutions for offenders sentenced to two years or less, most policing and courts, marriage and property, and civil rights. They also share responsibility with the federal government for agriculture and immigration.

Representatives at the provincial level are called members of the legislative assembly (MLA) and represent one of the provincial political parties. In Quebec, they are called Members of the National Assembly; in Ontario, they are Members of Provincial Parliament; in Newfoundland & Labrador, they are called Members of the House of Assembly. One MLA is elected in each provincial district. Of the 747 provincial representatives in Canada, over 25 per cent were women, as at October 2015. Provinces are divided into electoral districts which, in some places like Ontario, are coterminous with the federal electoral districts.

In each provincial electoral district there are riding associations which select the candidate to contest the elections. If you are considering running for provincial office in the future, it is important to get involved in your riding association. The association provides an entry point into understanding and navigating the political playing field. Be sure to find out who the key players are in the association (parties have a hierarchical structure which place riding secretaries and convention delegates at the bottom of the hierarchy).

The political party system is the *sine qua non* of provincial and federal politics. The parties are the gate keepers of the legislature, both provincially and federally. That is,

they determine the candidates vying for elections and often the electoral riding they represent. Parties also maintain the ability to select their candidates. In some cases, parties can appoint candidates without input from the riding association. Independent candidates also contest provincial and federal elections occasionally, but seldom win or are frontrunners.

Given that the political parties are currently dominated by men, these gate keepers often tend to prefer persons with similar socio-economic backgrounds to themselves. Moreover, it has been observed that women are sometimes placed in 'unwinnable' ridings or are pitted against each other. As a female candidate, being involved in the ridings association is one means of being known to the gatekeepers and other stakeholders. Your involvement will forge the right relationships and create a strong network in your riding association.

Federal Government

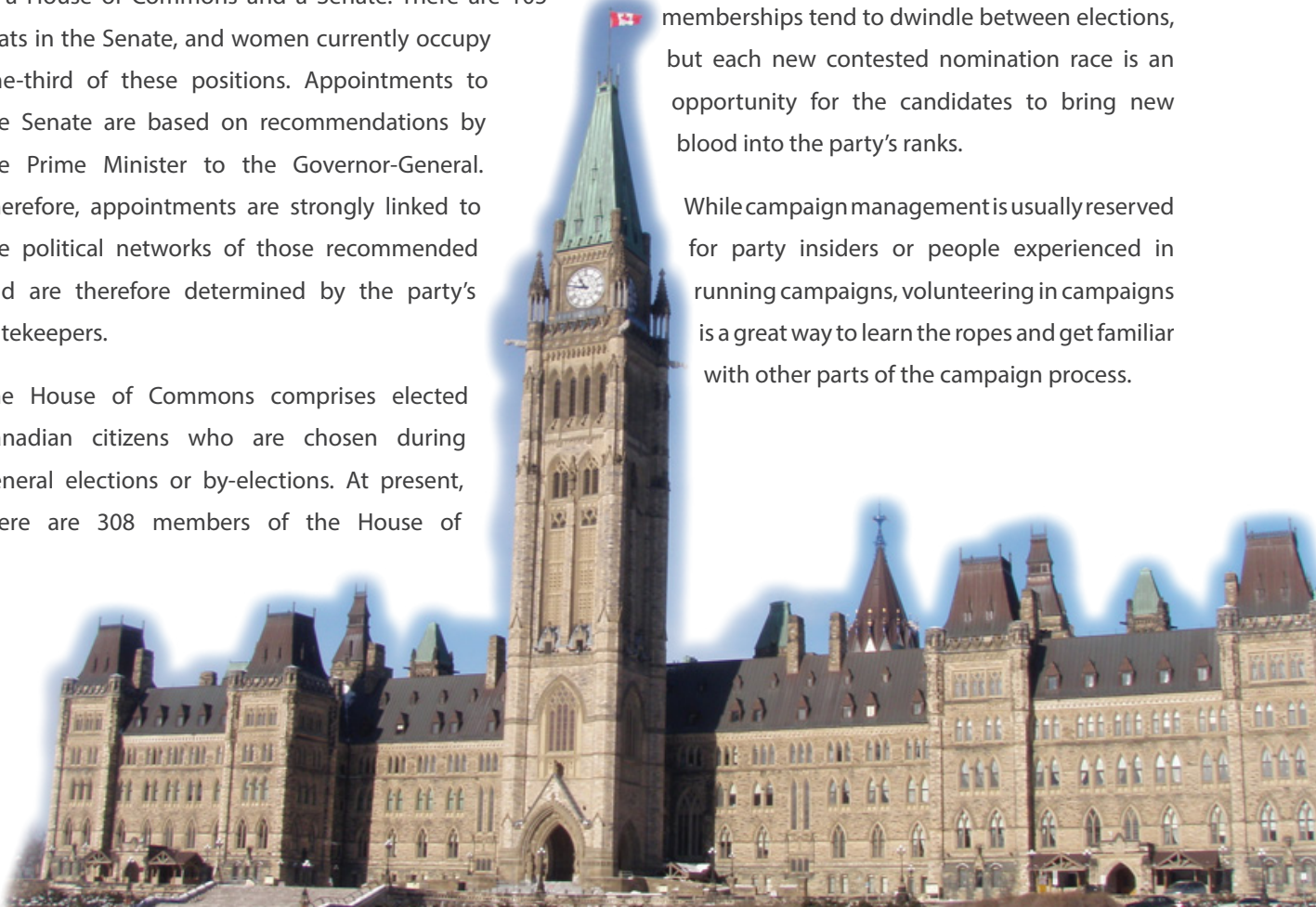
The federal system is usually seen as the highest rung of the government ladder. Parliament is comprised of a House of Commons and a Senate. There are 105 seats in the Senate, and women currently occupy one-third of these positions. Appointments to the Senate are based on recommendations by the Prime Minister to the Governor-General. Therefore, appointments are strongly linked to the political networks of those recommended and are therefore determined by the party's gatekeepers.

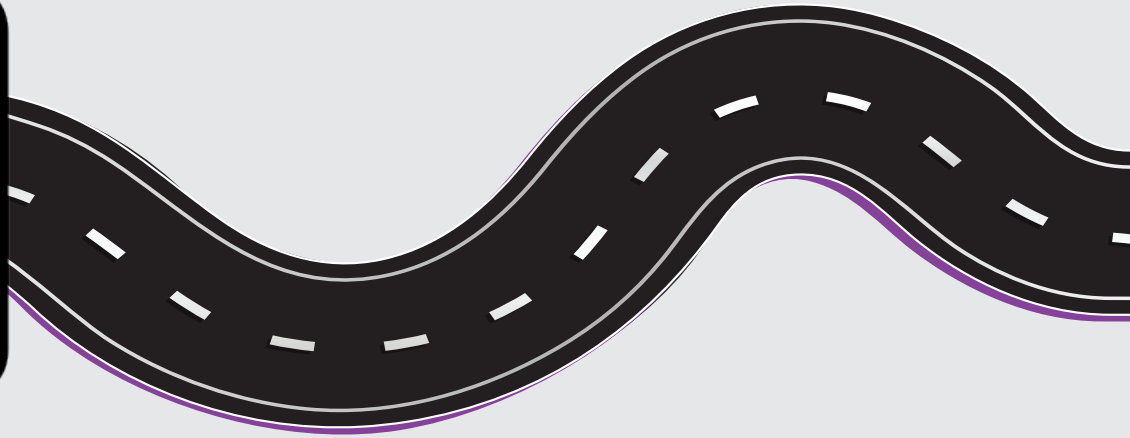
The House of Commons comprises elected Canadian citizens who are chosen during general elections or by-elections. At present, there are 308 members of the House of

Commons, of whom 25% are females. By 2015, new electoral boundaries should be in place that will add 30 more seats to the House of Commons and change the boundaries in some of the current electoral districts. Federal elections, like provincial elections, are based on the single-member plurality system. That is, the candidate with the highest number of votes wins a seat in the House of Commons and represents that electoral district as its Member of Parliament. Like provincial elections, federal elections are run along party lines, therefore, the party selects the individuals they think are best suited to face the electorate.

At the federal level, political party gate-keepers tend to be predominantly men who prefer candidates that reflect the dominant image of the party. However, the nomination process, discussed later, is almost always conducted through a vote of all riding association members. The successful nominated candidate is usually the one who attracts the most new memberships before the 'cut-off date', typically set for about a month before the nomination vote takes place. Riding association memberships tend to dwindle between elections, but each new contested nomination race is an opportunity for the candidates to bring new blood into the party's ranks.

While campaign management is usually reserved for party insiders or people experienced in running campaigns, volunteering in campaigns is a great way to learn the ropes and get familiar with other parts of the campaign process.





Assessing Your Readiness

When planning your political career, start with a critical survey of self and skills. Appendix 1, provided by Equal Voice, allows you to assess key skills and traits relevant to staging an effective campaign. It is absolutely crucial that you know yourself – your leadership skills, your stamina and drive, what wears you thin, where are your sensitive spots, your patience threshold – being self-aware puts you in the ‘driver’s seat with well-adjusted rear view mirrors’.

Extensive introspection and feedback from those you trust can illuminate weaknesses, blind spots, and strengths. The electorate can quickly sense if a candidate is inauthentic, which eventually hurts your chances of being elected. To be authentic, you need to know your strengths and highlight them as reasons why you are the best candidate to represent them. Knowing yourself is also important in projecting confidence to the electorate. This enables you to mitigate personal attacks by having the appropriate responses in hand.

Start with the Why

This crucial question is going to be asked over and over again, so make sure you have thought through the answer carefully.

Is this a career move? Have you always wanted to be in public life? What do you intend to do if you get elected? Who do you want to help? How are you going to help the pensioned widow? The young student? The businessperson? The young parent? Persons with disabilities? Is there a particular issue that concerns you that is not being adequately addressed, or addressed at all? Are the issues that you wish to champion local, provincial or national? Whose voice is not being heard? New Democratic Party MP, Niki Ashton remarked in a 2012 interview that “what [was] important to me [was] to bring forward voices that aren’t connected to the formal political system ... the voices of young people and people of our generation that are increasingly feeling disconnected from what we call politics.”¹

Share your desire to run for office with your close family and friends. They need to be cognizant of why this

¹ *The Star*, March 6, 2012

course of action is important to you. They will form an integral part of your emotional support system. As you make steps towards your decision, talk it through with family members, friends and mentors.

What are your strategic choices?

Having frankly and honestly examined why you are running, your intended contribution and what differentiates you from your counterparts, you need to develop two strategies based on your self-assessment. The first is a political strategy. If a political career is your goal, identify the best starting point, based on your knowledge of the ins and outs of politics, which level of government is most appropriate for you?

on the campaign staff of a female incumbent. You can also look at their record of nominations to find out how many women have run for office with that party, as well as their representation of women in parliament and the legislatures.

Having decided on the party that best aligns with your personal goals and values, you should join the riding association in the electoral district you are interested in. This process will also require a mapping of the ridings for that party, both provincially and federally: who are the incumbents? When will they retire? The turnover rate of Canadian politicians is greater than in other countries, there is always a turnover rate, and this of course offers

To be authentic, you need to know your strengths and highlight them as reasons why you are the best bet.

Even though engagement in local government can be rewarding, not all council positions are paid positions, especially in smaller communities. Some offer a part-time salary. Are you able to make the financial commitment? Can you work full-time and also maintain your local government commitments?

Conversely, you may wish to have a full-time career in politics, but have little exposure in campaigning or running for political office. If you wish to commence your political career by participating in federal or provincial elections, this requires ensuring that you are aware of which political party best aligns with your personal beliefs and values. If you are not already engaged with the party of your choice, you may wish to evaluate the parties based on their past treatment of female candidates. Which political party consistently fields female candidates? Are they fielded in winnable seats? What is the party's policy formal and informal policy on sexism? A good way to make your assessment of a party is to intern for them. Another option is to be a volunteer

opportunities for new entrants into the political arena. What are the strengths and weakness of the serving legislators? Chart the history of the ridings and their elections of female representatives. Know which ridings have never elected a female representative. If the incumbent is from your party and is planning to retire, it would be useful to build a working relationship with him/her. If you are in opposition to the incumbent, you can raise your community profile by getting involved in local issues and providing an alternative perspective. Become the 'official opposition' in the riding to raise your visibility.

Another interesting observation which has been made by electoral researchers is the positive correlation between urbanization and female representation. Conversely, it has been shown that an inverse relationship exists between the percentage of rural population in a province and the number of female representative. As at October 2014, the provinces with more than 80 per

cent urbanization have the highest percentage of female legislators.

The second element is to develop a personal strategy. Today's female politicians have a variety of backgrounds and life styles. They may be single, lesbian, widowed, married, divorced or involved in reproductive care. In fact, during the 2011 federal elections, 18 of the women elected were under 40 years old. This means that voters are less interested in normative values and more interested in leadership and results.

Your strategy should be informed by your SWOT analysis (Strengths, Weaknesses, Opportunities and Threats) and other self-assessments. Having a mentor can be an integral part of this process. Develop a strategy for the effective employment of your strengths and a plan to improve on your weakness. Research indicates that voters value experience and professionalism, which are then used as barometers for one's leadership capabilities. While most voters assume that male candidates have leadership capabilities, female candidates must demonstrate leadership skills. Your experience and professionalism will be used to make inferences about your leadership capabilities. Therefore, if experience is not one of your strengths, devise a plan to bolster your experience in the immediate and short-term. You may also use your previous work experiences or community involvement to demonstrate leadership, ability to deliver on promises and lead change. If you are reading this guide as a part of your long-term preparation for future involvement in politics, an immediate consideration should be to become involved in a professional association and/or labour union. If you are still in school, consider participating in student organising.

Another element of your personal strategy is considering how much time and resources you are able to devote to this effort. As mentioned before, municipal involvement is sometimes unpaid or has a small salary. Therefore municipal office could be an entrance strategy or part

of your mature career strategy. At the federal level, Members of Parliament are required to spend significant portions of the year in Ottawa which would mean the maintenance and operation of two offices - one in Ottawa and another in your riding. If your home-base is outside the main city of a provincial or federal capital, you may need to spend a considerable amount of time away from home, even as a provincial representative. The upside of serving at the federal and provincial level is the elected positions are salaried positions. However, these levels of government require the greatest financial outlay when seeking to be elected.

Another major consideration within your personal strategy is the involvement and support of your family. How will you manage your work/life balance during the campaign and while you are serving in office? Support from your family is important to voters and their perception of the 'true you'. Voters tend to judge female candidates on their family and personal lives.

It is also important to have the support of both your family and a trusted group of friends and advisers. There will be times when you will need their support and honest advice.

Do I have a mentor?

Your mentor will be pivotal to your nomination and election campaigns. Draw on relationships with political stalwarts with whom you identify. Is there someone in your earlier political exposure in school and/or post-secondary institutions who is now in a position of influence, or has relevant experience? In paying tribute to Jim Flaherty, former Minister of Finance, Dr. Kellie Leitch, Minister of Labour and Status of Women Canada credited the politician for her decision to run: "Jim encouraged me to get involved in politics and was the most dedicated mentor that a person could ask for.... He was my champion." A mentor can be either male or female. What is most essential is their ability and willingness to either

speak for you when seeking nomination or being able to provide you with good advice based upon experience.

Once successful, you can serve as a role model and mentor to those behind you.

Strategic Considerations

How do I stand out from the pack?

It is pertinent that you are fully cognizant of what differentiates you from your male counterparts and other candidates. What do you bring to the table as a woman?

Research shows that women in politics are more likely to:

- address issues such as reproductive care and reproductive rights;
- address gender in their legislative discussion;
- address issues that affect children, the elderly and others who are marginalized or less powerful
- make policies that are gender-specific and affirm the lives of women; and,
- promote a more conciliatory and less confrontational parliamentary style.

While being a female cannot - and should not - be your only differentiation, it is a vital starting point that needs to be embraced. Research shows that Canadian voters are generally partial towards commitment to personal integrity and values. Being industrious, qualified, compassionate and assertive are necessary traits but are not sufficient for success. As a woman, voters still require exceptional qualifications, such as being knowledgeable, organized and confident.

Also, be prepared for those who will underestimate your ability. Conservative MP Rona Ambrose – the youngest woman to be appointed to Cabinet – recalled in her first run for office in 2004, one man asserted that he would

not vote for her because she was a woman. Even though she considered politely walking away, Ambrose instead asked: “Well do you have a daughter, or a sister?” On his confirmation, she then responded, “Could you imagine if this was her passion and this was her path and you told her that she couldn’t do this because she was a woman?” He quickly got the message.²

She advised women interested in politics to “be prepared to work twice as hard, and be twice as smart as the guy beside you because, I see it time and time again, where men get away with looking the part but not necessarily “being” the part.³

Once you have finished your personal assessment, share it with those closest to you. This self-analysis should be revisited periodically. But even as you critically analyze your skills and weaknesses, never underestimate your worth and potential contribution.

What skills do I possess to bring about changes or improvements?

Assess your experiences. Previous skills in finance, time management and marketing, for example, can be honed through your involvement in the riding association. Did you participate in political life in school, or have you been involved in community (grassroots) organising? Has your field of employment given you skills and knowledge that are relevant to the issues in the campaign? In addition to honing critical skills, such experiences assist with public speaking as well as managing a public profile. Even the most seemingly trivial experiences and jobs you have had could be used to connect to potential voters who may have shared the same life histories. Building your experience into stories that resonate with voters can be an effective way of building rapport and establishing relationships with your electorate.

² <http://www.blogher.com/rona-ambrose-close-and-personal-talks-passionately-about-lifelong-mission-help-women-succeed>

³ Ibid 3

What is my agenda?

What are your positions on the major issues facing your community, city and country? You will need to have these clearly fixed in your mind before presenting yourself as a viable candidate. Being well-versed on three or four solid issues will go further than being slightly knowledgeable on several concerns. As a candidate in the provincial or federal elections, you need to be fully aware of your party's platform and how you will represent it effectively in your campaign to demonstrate relevance to the voters in your riding.

Furthermore, be familiar with the major issues and arguments of the other potential candidates, both on the points on which you agree and disagree. In the nomination process, all of the candidates will be seeking to represent the same party. How will you be able to be more effective? How can you prepare for your later campaign for election in the riding? Use your opponent's social media profiles, newspaper clippings and speeches to get a good idea of what you need to differentiate your candidacy from the others.

How are my people skills?

You will be spending a lot of your time engaging with staff, volunteers and most importantly, your potential

constituents. Running for office also means there will be long hours of door-to-door canvassing. As you assess your readiness, consider whether you are up to this task. Can you do it? Do you like it? Are you physically able?

If you are thinking of entering public life you have to be able to get out there, knock on a door, stick your hand out and say what you are doing and ask strangers to consider taking a little time to speak with you. And you have to be able to ask that key question: "Will you vote for me?" It is not an easy question to ask, but is as essential as actually putting your name on a ballot or sticking your sign up along the side of a road.

How will I introduce myself to my community as a candidate?

There are several ways to present yourself as a candidate, depending on your level of political engagement. These range from press releases, press conferences, parties or even a donation to your favourite charity. In any case, ensure that your first impression is an indelible one. All modes of communication: press releases, websites, interviews, etc. should emphasize that you are confident, organized and knowledgeable with the leadership skills required to effectively represent your constituents.

Practical Considerations

Do I have media training?

As a candidate, everything you do – or don't do, will be critiqued and reported on. Research has shown that women have a harder time than their male counterparts when presenting themselves to the public. Learning how to be tactful yet assertive, firm yet compassionate, all the while remaining consistent and collected can seem like an uphill battle, but will yield long-term results. Research has also shown that there is often pressure for female candidates to project an assertive or even authoritarian style that is typical of some male leaders in business, the military and politics. Most female candidates who succumb to that pressure are surprised when they are described as “shrill” or worse. Their mistake is to stop being their authentic selves and instead trying to mimic characteristics attributed to male politicians.

Further, the media in Canada is heavily masculinised and is not always kind to female candidates. In September

her candidacy for the 2011 British Columbia Liberal Party leadership race, she was again asked by journalist Bill Good how she planned to balance her role as a mother with the responsibilities of serving as provincial premier if she won – to which Clark answered,

Stephen Harper manages to go home for dinner with his kids every night, or most nights when he's in the country, and he has breakfast with them in the morning, and he's a pretty busy guy. He does a pretty good job. Every family has their own circumstances and makes their own decisions. I've talked about this with my family. My son is no longer a toddler. We've had this conversation. And we can handle it.⁴

There will always be some concerns about how the media represents female candidates. Words may be manipulated in order to make a story more interesting or sensational. However, a good relationship with the media is one of the most effective means of getting your

However, a good relationship with the media is one of the most effective means of getting your message out and disarming personal attacks concerning you and your family.

2000, with anticipation of an early federal election, a leading newspaper tweaked the highly masculine metaphor attributed to former boxer Muhammad Ali, to state the lone female party leader was “floating like a butterfly, [but] stinging like a mosquito.” In a more recent example, in October 2014, the sole female candidate in the mayoral race in Toronto was caricatured as riding on a long coattail of her deceased husband, despite her own distinguished history of accomplishments as a municipal and federal politician. When Christy Clark announced

message out and disarming personal attacks concerning you and your family. Relationships with those who either ridicule or defend you will be essential. You should plan to allocate funds to hire a media consultant to be part of your campaign team. Learning to accept criticism is also an important strength. Remarks like those mentioned previously should not be taken personally. In any case, a sense of humour can also very helpful and should be used effectively to deflect negative comments.

⁴ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Women_in_Canadian_politics#cite_note-clark-14

Do I have a strong social media presence?

Twitter, Facebook, LinkedIn, Instagram, Tumblr...all of these platforms (and more!) must be carefully curated and maintained. A great example of how a female politician can leverage their social media is Green Party leader Elizabeth May. Not only does she have an active presence on Facebook, YouTube and Twitter, she also blogs regularly and is often available for interviews. And it has paid off: according to an analysis of social media activity her tweets on topical political issues often are the most retweeted messages.

A strong social media presence can easily translate to improved visibility for you. However, it is often recommended that this is outsourced as a way to mitigate angry rants or opinions reached in the heat of a moment which cannot be erased. Once comments are on social media they can be spread rapidly, resulting in devastating consequences. Your media consultant can assist with your social media presence and that of the management of your partner's and/or children's social media accounts during the electoral campaign.⁵

How will I finance my run?

This assessment is essential to your long-term and short-term political strategy. As previously indicated, political involvement at the municipal level is less costly, but is generally financed from personal resources. Provincial/territorial and federal candidates have greater financial hurdles, but candidates can utilise the resources of the party and its supporters.

In Canada, campaign contributions are limited for everyone, including the candidate. Candidates cannot exceed their maximum donation amount, and must collect donations as an ongoing part of their campaign preparation and active campaign. Provincial, federal and territorial elections have different campaign financing regulations that must be strictly adhered to. It is crucial to familiarize yourself with the rules pertaining to the location in which you are seeking election. These can be found through the electoral management body, such as Elections Canada or Elections Ontario. Your campaign must include a financial consultant or similar position to ensure you adhere to the spending rules.

⁵ <https://ca.news.yahoo.com/blogs/canada-politics/elizabeth-mays-voice-rings-loudest-against-bill-205754195.html>



THE ROAD TO CANDIDACY

The Road to Candidacy

Dive in!

Sometimes the best strategy is to just do it. Liberal candidates Megan Cornell and Rosalyn Stevens advised that waiting for the stars to align was a futile exercise. At times it is just better to present yourself as a candidate to the people or to the party, especially since males tended to be the default when parties were looking for a candidate. At the federal and provincial level, voters tended to vote for the party leader as opposed to solely on the candidate. “Don’t think about moment to moment,” Cornell advised, “just jump right in.” She added that women tended to ‘over-think’ decisions which made them delay major life choices – like engaging in elective politics.

The nomination process

The nomination process for a potential candidate begins with appointing an official agent and an auditor. Once an election has been announced, candidates are

required to fill out the Nomination Paper. If a candidate has been endorsed by a political party, the Nomination Paper has to include a letter of endorsement signed by the leader of the party. A witness signs the document which, in most jurisdictions, must list at least 100 eligible voters. The Nomination Paper is then submitted to the returning officer by the witness. Nomination Papers are reviewed within 48 hours. Megan Cornell, lawyer and 20-year veteran in politics, said that within the provincial and federal election processes, the nomination process is probably the only aspect of the election process that is about the candidate. You compete and succeed based on your merit and hard work. She further argued that after you have been nominated being elected as a provincial or federal legislator, more significance is placed on the public’s perception of the party, its policies, and its leader. Thus, the nomination process is your time to shine. She outlined a four-tier method of getting through the nomination process

Who's Got the Power?

This can be a tenuous line to balance. While it is usually important for the grassroots to have the decisive voice in candidate selection, some constituencies tend to choose candidates who are well-known internally but have little chance of getting elected. In order to diversify the party's ticket, leaders will occasionally appoint a candidate who may not earn the favour of the riding association or the constituents.

Knowing the Nature of the Beast: Competitive Nominations

Is your intended riding a popular one for your party? If so, the nomination may be a competitive one, where several candidates may be interested in running under the party ticket. Therefore, engaging the support of those in your community will be essential. "Low hanging fruit" -- i.e. family, friends and members of service or interest groups you are involved in -- are always your best bet to recruit as riding association members. Also forge alliances throughout the community. These can include reaching

This stage is often referred to as 'being in the trenches' as it called for long hours and showed slow signs of progress. Essentially, you will be building a political support base within your constituency. This involves tapping into every thread of your network, your colleagues, your professional associates, the associations at your kids' schools, the grocer at the corner to mention a few. This is where professionalism and personal branding are most important.

You may also wish to engage the assistance of your municipal representative and provincial or federal representatives if they are members of your party and depending on the political space that you are contesting. That is, if you are vying for provincial candidacy, you may wish to engage your municipal and federal representative (if your party represents that riding) or contenders (if your party is also vying for that riding at the national level). A word of caution is noteworthy with respect to municipal representatives. Even though a municipal representative may be popular and be helpful, they may be unable to

Sometimes the best strategy is to just do it. Waiting for the stars to align may be a futile exercise.

out to ethnic communities and influential members of these communities, especially since they tend to vote in blocs.

Signing up party members

Some argue that this is probably the most difficult element of the nomination process. Not only do you need to garner personal support from your network you need to get persons in your networks to join your party, as nomination selection is restricted to members of your party. However, many persons in your networks will not be willing to join your party even though they are willing to support you should you win the nomination.

deliver on full support, because their base may be across several party lines.

Getting out the vote

In a competitive nomination, not only do you need to sign up members to join your party, but in order for them to satisfy the eligibility requirement, you need to get them out on Nomination Day to vote for you. Nominations are often lost because candidates did not get their supporters out to vote. Getting out the vote entails developing a strategy ahead of time. Consideration should be given to matters such as the number of volunteers required to make reminder calls;

transporting supporters; and monitoring the voting of your supporters. Do you need to procure transportation services? Do you have enough volunteers to transport, call and monitor voting? Was this included in the nomination budget? Losing by thousands of votes may be explainable; it may mean that at this point in time you do not have a strong support base in your riding. However, losing a nomination process by a few votes could indicate that a little more effort was needed in getting supporters out to vote. From all reports this is your toughest job and hardest phase.

Party Power

Party connections cannot be discounted. Making the right links within the ranks can also be invaluable. Network with members at all levels, including the university-affiliated groups. Strong ties with campus-led groups can also provide you with a good potential pool of campaign volunteers.

Your engagement with these young volunteers should continue, even if you do not earn the nomination or if the party does not win, Rosalyn Stevens added. A sustained relationship with a crop of enthusiastic volunteers

can help to build your name in lead-up to the next election, assisting you with public outreach, social media campaigns and maintaining visibility.

Cross the T's and Check the Closets

At the provincial and federal level, a vetting process takes place to make sure there is no information that could be used to discredit the potential candidate. This is done by combing through search engine results, social media and candidate phone interviews with party stakeholders. Public statements where you speak against the party, affiliations with alleged or possible terrorist groups, or actions which call your character into question will be fully investigated. Due diligence usually also involves conversations with those in your circle. This is done to find out perceptions of your personality.

Therefore, if you are thinking about becoming a candidate, carefully manage your public persona and social media profiles as anything you post can be used against you, or as a judge of your character and the type of politician you will be.



THE ROAD TO THE LEGISLATURE

Campaign Management

It is recommended that you start with a campaign strategy. Appendix 11, developed by Equal Voice, though not exhaustive, provides some guidelines for developing a campaign strategy. In your strategy give consideration to the profile of your riding or ward. What are the demographics? How culturally diverse is the ward or riding? Where is your likely support base? Where should your campaign office be located?

Next choose a tight-knit circle of people who are committed to the cause, hard-working and loyal to you. Try to make your team gender-neutral with representatives from diverse organisations and interests. Provincial and federal candidates are required to identify an official agent upon registering. The agent's main job is to oversee expenses and contributions for the campaign, so make sure the person you choose has the commensurate skills. In circumstances of campaign spending problems or violations, it is the official agent

(CFO) and the candidate who are legally liable for their actions.

Assemble a core team.

Research shows that the key persons on a campaign team should be your mentor, campaign manager and agent (if different from your manager or mentor). With your core team take some time and develop your campaign calendar. Equal Voice has provided a sample of an 8-Week Campaign Calendar – Appendix 111 - this can be used as template to model your own calendar.

The rest of the team, such as volunteers, should be sourced and managed by your core team. Responsible delegation is important to an effective and ultimately successful campaign. While you need to delegate, you also must be aware of what is happening during your campaign because you are ultimately accountable and have the most to win or lose. This is where having a campaign manager you trust is crucial. Candidates

need to 'stay out of the weeds' of daily decision making and trust their team to make the right decisions. Some key decisions can be brought to the candidate, but most should be run through the campaign team while you as the candidate stay focussed on meeting voters, delivering speeches, etc. In this sense, the campaign manager should know you well, know how you would approach most issues and be able to speak for you on a variety of topics.

What personal sacrifices will I have to make to ensure my campaign is successful?

Your time, health and stress level will certainly take a beating for several months. While pre-campaigning lasts for up to a number of years, the actual electoral period is limited to less than two months. Take preventative measures to keep self and sanity in check at all times. Remember, there can be no campaign without you.

Revisit Appendix 1, reassess areas such as patience level and stress management. If you hadn't before think about a coping plan. To reiterate, 'You need to ensure that you look after You'. Make a plan to take a daily break; a good rule of thumb is to build into your daily routine a two to three hour break. This allows you to pace yourself and if necessary to have longer days.

Money Matters

See yourself as a successful business. The success of any venture rests heavily on money and branding, which we will discuss below.

How will you finance your campaign? There are several factors which you need to consider when it comes to financing the campaign, especially at the federal level.

Naysayers will remark that you will find fundraising difficult for female candidates. Ignore this. There is a much misplaced stereotype that women cannot raise money. Research conducted by the International Institute for Democracy and Electoral Assistance (2014) indicates that women have limited access to "moneyed networks", which can impact their reach as compared to male counterparts. They also argue that women usually have fewer personal financial resources to draw on. However, other researchers have shown that this is not the case; women with the right knowledge and attitude can attract a large donor base. So can you! Here are some tips from personal testimonies.

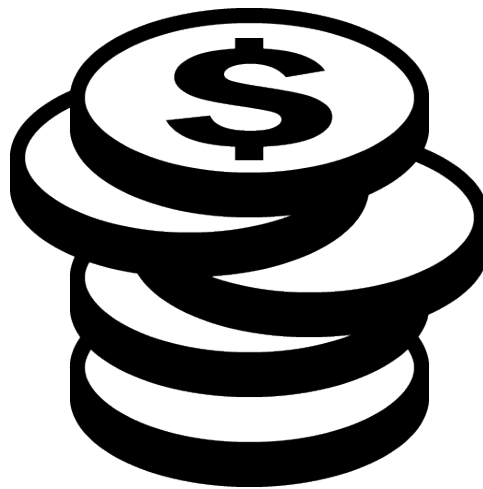
We turned to Isabel Metcalfe, a former municipal candidate in Ottawa, for some tips and tricks on campaign financing. Isabel has more than three decades of experience at the federal, provincial and municipal levels of government and NGOs.

Yes, you can!

"The assumption that women cannot raise money for their campaign is simply not true!" Isabel advises candidly. She recalls that once she devised a strategy for gathering donations, she was able to do so quite effectively.

Her claim is supported by Political Parity, a nonpartisan platform which seeks to improve

women's political participation in the US. They noted that studies done on female general election candidates noted that female candidates were able to raise just as much as men in the same party and running in similar positions (i.e. both candidates were newcomers).



Know what is legally possible - An absolute necessity.

The Canada Elections Act governs when and how campaign donations can be sourced and utilised. At the federal level, the law has strict spending limits set for political parties, election candidates and nomination candidates based on the number of electors and population density of the constituencies, among other factors.⁶ The Act has also defined the parameters for campaign expenses, campaign inflows, contributions and donations as well as legal fundraising methods. Finally, the legislation regulates the processes necessary for closing accounts and the documentation required at the end of a campaign. This piece of legislation also underscores the vital role of the Official Agent – so once again, ensure that your agent is someone that you trust, especially with money. Failure to pay attention to these rules could result in various penalties, including fines and even disqualification from office, so pay attention to them.

Each province has its own jurisdiction over the regulation of provincial and municipal elections and this also

pertains to how finances are controlled in an election period. In many jurisdictions in Canada, both direct and indirect expenses of the candidate are covered. In addition, a spending limit is enforced which is usually based on the number of eligible voters in the district where the candidate is running, or the total electoral district where a particular political party has candidates who are running. Furthermore, most jurisdictions have strict guidelines on the maximum levels of contributions that can be accepted by candidates, the funding of campaign elections, and, also the disclosure of campaign funds as a method of ensuring transparency.⁷ In Ontario for example, there are only three types of eligible contributors: Ontario residents, corporations operating in Ontario that are not registered charities and labour councils and trade unions organising for Ontario employees. These eligible contributors can give up to \$9,975 to a central party in any year, and again during a campaign period. The cap for the riding associations is \$6,650, but no more than \$1,330 per year to the same association. Up to \$6,650 and no more than \$1,330 can be donated to a single candidate.⁸

⁶ <http://mapleleafweb.com/features/federal-campaign-finance-laws-canada>

⁷ http://www.elections.ca/res/eim/article_search/article.asp?id=74&lang=e&frmPageSize

⁸ <http://www.elections.on.ca/en-ca/faqs/electionfinances.htm>

Contributions limits

The table below from Elections Canada gives a breakdown of possible contributions for a federal run:

Limits on Contributions, Loans and Loan Guarantees		
Political entity	2015 annual limit	Limit per event called between Jan. 1, 2015 and Dec. 31, 2015
To each registered party	\$1,500*	n/a
In total to all the registered associations, nomination contestants and candidates	\$1,500*	n/a
In total to all leadership contestants in a particular contest	\$1,500*	n/a
To each independent candidate	n/a	\$1,500*

Notes:

- The contribution limits apply to: total contributions, the unpaid balance of loans made during the contribution period and the amount of any loan guarantees made during the contribution period that an individual is still liable for. The sum of these three amounts cannot at any time exceed the contribution limit.
- A nomination contestant is permitted to give an additional \$1,000 in total per event in contributions, loans or loan guarantees to his or her own campaign.
- A candidate is permitted to give a total of \$5,000 in contributions, loans and loan guarantees to his or her campaign.
- A candidate is also permitted to give an additional \$1,500 in total per year in contributions, loans or loan guarantees to other candidates, registered associations and nomination contestants of each party. (This includes contributions to the registered association in the candidate's electoral district and contributions to the candidate's own nomination campaign.)
- A leadership contestant is permitted to give a total of \$25,000 in contributions, loans and loan guarantees to his or her campaign.
- A leadership contestant is also permitted to give an additional \$1,500 in total per year in contributions, loans or loan guarantees to other leadership contestants.
- The limits will increase by \$25 on January 1st in each subsequent year.

Once you are aware of the limitations of campaign contributions and finances, how do you go about encouraging potential donors to invest in you?

Select a knowledgeable Official Agent

As stated before, this should be a person that you trust completely. They should also have an in-depth understanding of the Canada Elections Act as they will have total control of the finances. Should there be any inaccuracies in campaign finances, they will also be held accountable in a court-of-law. This person will often be one of a few persons who are aware of how well you are doing in the polls and will therefore be your only confidante when critical campaign decisions must be taken.

Candidates have often found it more useful to have someone who has already served as an Official Agent. The benefits of this are invaluable, as they bring in-depth knowledge of the law and are well seasoned in the proper campaign procedures. Should there be any misgivings with campaign finances, they will also be held accountable in a court-of-law.

Cast a wide net

The importance of your networks has already been acknowledged as a key resource for announcing yourself as a candidate. In this instance, the power of your network lies in a potential donor base. Send well-conceived, personalised letters, e-mails and other forms of correspondence to persons in your database or Listserv. Focus on introducing yourself and showcasing your professionalism. Where possible, let someone else tell your story. Try not to pre-empt responses and engage widely even with those you think may not vote for you. As Isabel pointed out, while they may not vote for you that does not exclude them from donating: “all money is good money,” she said.

Ensure ease of accessibility

Make it easy for donors to contribute. Also tell them of the advantages and tax rebates (where applicable) available

for making campaign donations. Always include your payee notice on all collateral items – business cards, letters, brochures, and website. “It is an imperative that each potential investor should have quick access to “the cheque payee for the cheque.”⁹ Remember, the official agent has sole oversight of the bank account.

Know what is available

Perhaps there are grants and funds that you can tap into which are specially designed for female candidates.¹⁰ A good example of this would be EMILY’S List in the United States, which raises funds for candidates who have a clear pro-choice stance on abortion. Here in Canada, the Liberal Party sought to formalise its fundraising efforts for women through the Judy LaMarsh Fund. The fund was established in 1984 by female leaders in the Liberal Party who wanted other females to ascend politically. Money is raised mainly through fundraising events. The fund also adheres to the financial regulations set in place by the Canada Elections Act.

Inexpensive is good

Inexpensive forms of community engagement may include participating in charity events, outreach events or school visits. Any event/activity requiring you to pay should be carefully considered as they will have to be funded by the campaign. If you decide to host an event, make it inexpensive, yet interesting and memorable. Isabel recommends, “It does not take a lot of money to have a wine and cheese meet-and-greet at the home of a supporter.”¹¹ Focusing on low-cost events provides an opportunity to optimise the best bang for your buck, while mitigating losses from low attendance. Where possible, get supporters and persons close to you to host these events, thereby reducing your campaign expenditures.

⁹ Quote from Isabel Metcalfe.

¹⁰ Ballington, J., Davis, R., Reith, M., Mitchell, L., Njoki, C., Kozma, A., & Powley, E. (2012). Empowering women for stronger political parties: a guidebook to promote women's political participation. New York; Washington, DC: United Nations Development Programme; National Democratic Institute for International Affairs.

¹¹ This type of event – a hosted reception – is often the most effective way to make an appeal for donations from strangers because as a candidate you have an opportunity to speak briefly and to meet people one-on-one. The host, by inviting their network, is already providing an endorsement.

Always be grateful!

Write thank you notes to all your donors, regardless of the sum donated. Allow them to know how grateful you are for their contributions. Keep them updated on your campaign. This attitude of gratitude should extend to your volunteers and campaign team. Make sure they feel like they are an integral part of the campaign's success. One way to show your appreciation would be to set aside part of the budget for a post-campaign party for your volunteers and support staff.

Confidence in Cheque

Keep at least one cheque in your purse. Candidates have found that this is a confidence booster. It feels good to know that persons have confidence in you and the cheque is a reminder of that affirmation.

Leave no cent unspent

An excellent fundraiser accepts cheques while simultaneously discussing its disbursement with their Official Agent. Discuss the cash inflows and outflows with your Official Agent daily. Draw on your knowledge of the Canada Elections Act or provincial legislation to push your budgets lines to the permissible limit. All unspent funds must be turned over to the government. Unspent funds can go also back to the riding association, but it is good practice to spend everything you take in. Donors want to see their money being used.

if you decide to do so when there is no legal requirement for disclosure this augurs well for your reputation underscoring your professionalism and accountability. It may also be important to inform your donors of your disclosure plans.

The efficiency with which you manage fundraising and campaign financing is a signifier of how you will manage the budget and finances of your elected office. This may be the only evidence that voters will have that you are up to the task of managing the finances of your city, province or country. Appendix 1V provides a succinct summary of the aforementioned points.

Branding Matters

You are your product

Branding is important as it captures who you are, what you represent and how you differ from male candidates. The hallmarks of your brand should be professionalism, confidence, organization and knowledge. These will make you top of mind and will draw voters towards you. They convey to voters that you are the best choice - you know what you are doing and you can execute professionally, effectively and efficiently.

As discussed before, if necessary, enlist professional assistance in creating your personal brand, this will be money well spent. Just as companies invest in their brand creation and public image, so should you. Make

The hallmarks of your brand should be professionalism, confidence, organization and knowledge.

Decide at the outset whether you intend to disclose the identity of your donors and/or the amounts given before the election date. Doing so gives you the advantage of being seen as transparent and honest. The source and amount of donations are often made public long after an election, but if you decide to do so earlier, and certainly

sure this image reflects the substance of who you are as a person and as a candidate.

Additionally, ensure that each piece of collateral material has the same message. Be consistent. Spend money on ensuring that your website is professional and has your complete message. Candidates have found that days

(and perhaps minutes) before going to the polls, voters review the website of the candidates. A website which has your complete message and accurately conveys your professionalism may be the difference between success and failure.

Your brand is a promise and all aspects of your brand should ensure that voters can trust that promise. The ultimate point of a brand is not to create emotional appeal or to generate buzz. The point is to shift customer demand towards your product. Branding is a means of shifting voters towards you and away from your opponent. Even if your issues must be the same as theirs, your message must remain consistent and your image confident and professional.

Raise your visibility – Proudly display your brand.

Be unabashed about the issues you represent. Confidence is critical to brand success and to campaign financing. Whether they know you or not, potential supporters will not invest in you if they think you are not interested in advancing the cause of your community, city, province or country.

In your strategic analysis, you would have identified issues that both you and voters feel strongly about (party platforms, the history and stances of opposing candidates, your strengths – credibility, passion). Keep these issues foremost and central in your branding and imaging. Your brand must reflect your core values and this message must be consistent throughout your campaign. Such consistency is a trademark of professionalism and demonstrates keen leadership skills.

CONCLUSION

This short handbook has guided you through the challenges and opportunities of running for elected office in Canada. We have discussed the role of understanding what you bring to the table as well as assessing strengths and weaknesses. The importance of campaign financing and following the correct protocols was also highlighted, with the invaluable assistance of Isabel Metcalfe.

There is more that can be said - and needs to be said - about running for elected office as a female in Canada. But it is our hope that this guide will prove to be a useful tool in your race towards the ballot-box.

We will conclude with highlighting some of the historic strides made by women in Canadian electoral politics over the past 100 years and some words of wisdom that have been handed down through the annals of time.

Historic Progress



Hannah Gale

In 1917 Hannah Gale not only made history in Canada she also made history in the British Commonwealth when she became the first woman elected into politics in

Canada. On Dec 10, she was elected as an Alderman for the City of Calgary municipal council.



Louise McKinney

Known as one of Alberta's "Famous five"¹² Louise McKinney became the first woman to serve in the Legislative Assembly of Alberta from 1917 to 1921. She was also the first woman to be elected to a

legislature in Canada and in the British Empire. McKinney was an activist and a strong supporter of women's rights. One major output of her activism was women achieving adult suffrage in Alberta. An early exponent of gender equality McKinney asserts, "What, after all, is the purpose of a woman's life? The purpose of a woman's life is just the same as the purpose of a man's life: that she may make the best possible contribution to the generation in



which she is living".¹³

Agnes Macphail

Agnes Macphail of the Progressive Party was elected as the first woman elected to Parliament in 1921 to represent the province of Ontario. She was one of five women who had contested the elections after women's suffrage at the federal level had been achieved in 1918. MacPhail was also one of the first women represented to the legislature in Ontario. Reflecting on the tenacity of women to make a difference Macphail declares, "Most of the women who have offered themselves for public office over the years have done so, I believe, more because of the 'dirt' than in spite of it."¹⁴



Thérèse Forget Casgrain

Thérèse Forget Casgrain was a feminist, leader of the League for Women's Rights, and federal vice-president of the CCF party. From 1951 to 1957 she led the Quebec wing of the CCF party. She was a CCF candidate in a number of federal elections and by-elections and was president of the Quebec wing of the New Democratic Party in the 1960's. In 1970 she was appointed to the Senate.

¹² <http://www.famous5.ca/index.php/the-famous-5-women/the-famous-5-women>

¹³ Ibid 11

¹⁴ <http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/quotes/a/agnesmacph402690.html#jQrFhDr6lfjFKp1m.99>



Alexa McDonough

In 1980, Alexa McDonough made history by becoming the first woman to lead a national, recognized political party in Canada, when she was elected the Nova Scotia New Democratic Party's (NSNDP) leader. One of her greatest legacies was her ability to attracting other women to political leadership in Nova Scotia. This included the first African-Nova Scotian woman, Yvonne Atwell, who was elected to the legislature there in 1999.¹⁵



Elizabeth May

Elizabeth May made May not only her legal name but gave it historic political significance when she became the first elected member of Parliament of the Green Party in May 2011. May's success is a testimony to strategy and hard work and confirms that Canadians do want to send more women to Ottawa. She was able to make a breakthrough in a riding that previously had rarely elected a non-conservative candidate. May's quote which has become quite popular, "Today we proved that Canadians want change in politics" captures the spirit that women can make a change.



Ethel Dorothy Blondin-Andrew

Ethel Dorothy Blondin-Andrew was the first aboriginal woman to be elected to the House of Commons. A member of a First Nation Blondin-Andrew represented the Liberal Party and won the 1988 election in the district of Western Arctic in the Northwest Territories.¹⁶



Rosemary Brown

Born in Jamaica, in 1972, Rosemary Brown became the first Black Canadian woman to serve in a Canadian legislature.¹⁷ She served as a member of

the legislature in British Columbia from 1972 to 1986.¹⁸ Being a strong feminist she advocated for women's rights and community building. This sentiment is captured in her famous quote, "We must open the doors and we must see to it they remain open, so that others can pass through".¹⁹

Kathleen Wynne



In 1999, Kathleen Wynne failed to capture the provincial nomination for the Liberal Party for the riding of St. Paul. However, not daunted by her initial attempt, she won the nomination for the Liberal Party for Don Valley West in 2003 and later became a Member of the Legislative Assembly for that party.

In 2013 history was made in Ontario when the leadership of the Liberal party was keenly contested by two women Sandra Pupatello and Kathleen Wynne. Wynne defeated Pupatello and established her place in history as Ontario's first female Premier and Canada's first openly gay Premier. She also became the first openly gay head of head of government in the Commonwealth. In 2014, Wynne's position in history was reaffirmed when she became the first elected female Premier of Ontario and the first openly gay elected head of government in Canada and in the Commonwealth. Kathleen Wynne's political resilience and her belief that professionalism is the key to political success is astutely captured in one of her now famous quotes, "In every election homophobia has been part of the landscape and in every campaign I've been able to become connected enough to my constituents that they know who I am and that I can be elected on my merits".²⁰

¹⁵ <http://www.equalvoice.ca/pdf/Halifax%20MP%20Alexa%20McDonough.pdf>

¹⁶ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Ethel_Blondin-Andrew

¹⁷ http://www.urbancentre.utoronto.ca/pdfs/curp/Heineck_Women-Power-Politic.pdf

¹⁸ http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Rosemary_Brown_%28politician%29

¹⁹ <http://www.heroines.ca/people/brown.html>

²⁰ http://www.brainyquote.com/quotes/authors/k/kathleen_wynne.html#gh3UQXmRBFhwSGAh.99

SELF-ASSESSMENT EXERCISE

Rate yourself on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 being weak and 5 being strong.

Patience Level

1 2 3 4 5

Reporters and constituents may ask you inappropriate questions. You may be asked the same question many times. Can you remain calm when dealing with people on a regular basis whom you find annoying or frustrating?

Leadership Skills

1 2 3 4 5

Do you like working with people? Do people trust you and confide in you? Are you able to listen empathetically to someone else's problems or concerns? Are you able to delegate responsibility effectively and to openly demonstrate your appreciation for the hard work and loyalty of your supporters? Do you have access to individuals and groups who would work for your campaign?

Public Speaking

1 2 3 4 5

Can you speak easily in front of diverse groups and to the media? Are you articulate? Does it take you a long time to practice a speech before you feel comfortable, or do you need only to read it once or twice to ensure you remember the salient points? Are you able to handle unanticipated questions effectively?

Stress Management Skills

1 2 3 4 5

Can you set priorities and follow them? Can you deal with the highs and lows of your campaign with a fairly even temperament? Are you able to do many different tasks at once, or are you easily overwhelmed by disorganization and confusion? Would you be able to keep your campaign running smoothly?

Stamina/Endurance

1 2 3 4 5

Are you able to work long hours under stressful conditions? Can you pace yourself? Are you able to travel well and schedule your activities so you don't burn out? Are you able to stop and day no before you become completely exhausted?

Impact on Personal Life

1 2 3 4 5

Does your family support the idea of your getting involved in politics? Can you modify or take leave from your work/volunteer/family commitments during the campaign? Do you have a network of friends who can offer you moral support? Could you, when necessary, put the needs of your constituents ahead of your own?

Appendix I – Self Assessment

Political Know-How

1 2 3 4 5

Do you know the intricacies of how the government works? Do you have adequate knowledge and understanding of the issues? Do you know how to play the “game” of politics, such as when to say how much? Do you know what resources are available to help you become informed?

Experience

1 2 3 4 5

Have you served on agencies, boards or commissions? Have you served on volunteer committees in your community? If you are involved in partisan politics, were you active in the party before seeking the nomination? Have you ever been actively involved in working for another candidate’s campaign?

Add other items, both positive and negative, that are present in your particular situation that could be factors in your decision to run for public office.

Many women tend to downplay their skills and experience and, as a result, you may have rated yourself poorly in this exercise. Make sure someone else checks your results. Keep in mind that many of the skills you may be lacking can be learned and acquired.

POINTS FOR DEVELOPING A CAMPAIGN STRATEGY

Here are some points you must address in your strategy:

- Clearly define your riding or ward **profile**: demographics – boundaries – main employer(s) – poll by poll breakdown – local authorities – elected members at all levels of government – special interest groups – who the media is (print & electronic)
- Define your profile as a candidate: your strengths and weaknesses – any possible skeletons in the closet that your “kitchen cabinet” should know about.
- Do some **research** and, if you can afford it, some polling to find out: 1) if you are “electable”; 2) is there an existing political hierarchy in your riding or ward, and who are these people; 3) what issues do people have on their minds; 4) where various parties, special interest groups or community organizations and their leaders stand on these issues; 4) where your opponents stand on these issues; 5) what issues are your opponents running with; 6) where can you raise money.
- Assess your potential **supporters** (for financing and for media purposes), networks, groups.
- Determine all the aspects **of rules and regulations** that can be of positive use to your campaign (including what some may call dirty trick: if they are according to rules, they are not dirty, they are smart).
- Craft a **message or slogan** that will be effective throughout your campaign ([more on this under communication strategy](#))
- Build a **calendar** indicating key dates, events and defining tasks to be accomplished.
- Determine what needs to be done in the **short, medium and long term**: to respect rules and regulations, acquire funds, hire people, produce material, create events, communicate, etc.
- **ADVICE: NEVER EVER UNDERSTIMATE YOUR OPPONENTS.**

SAMPLE OF AN 8-WEEK CAMPAIGN CALENDAR

WEEK 8

- Establish official headquarters
- Call a press conference
- Distribute participation cards

WEEK 7

- Kick-off rally
- Solicitation letters mailed
- Announce news release
- Arrange luncheons and breakfasts
- Strategy committee meets
- Meet media (editors or other)
- Prepare election day strategy

WEEK 5

- News release
- Buttons and bumper stickers appear
- Strategy committee meets
- Continuing follow-up on solicitation letters
- Meet the candidate sessions
- Luncheons and breakfasts
- Plan dates for mailings and literature drops

WEEK 4

- News release
- Strategy committee meets
- Continuing follow-up for fund raising
- Poll workers rally
- All candidates' meetings begin
- Lawn signs could begin to appear
- Billboards appear

WEEK 3

- News releases on issues unfolding
- Strategy committee meets
- Re-contact people who promised contribution but have not yet sent it.
- All candidates' meeting
- Candidate canvasses in swing-vote areas (determine best time)
- Newspaper ads could begin
- House to house canvass begins

PEEK WEEKS

WEEK 2

- News releases on issues unfolding
- Strategy committee meets
- All candidates' meeting
- House to house canvassing continues
- Literature drop
- Candidate canvasses
- Radio/TV spots
- Newspaper ads
- Pick up all necessary credentials for returning officer

WEEK 1

- News releases on issues unfolding
- Strategy committee meets
- Postcard campaign
- Scrutineer named for every poll
- House to house canvassing continues
- Candidate's energy directed to most productive initiatives
- Radio/TV spots
- Endorsement ads

ELECTION DAY

- Make sure all your workers vote
- Coordinate telephone campaign to known supporters to offer transportation and sitting services
- Arrange transportation to the polls

POST ELECTION

- Victory party
- Send thank-you letters
- Dismantle organization – keep all records for next election

FUNDRAISING TIPS

Here are some steps to follow on how to raise money and who should be making the pitch. They were provided by seasoned campaign managers

Before starting your fundraising campaign, you must learn to say “I need your help in my campaign”. Then, establish three lists of names of people you will solicit. On your first list, enter the names of all your 'nearest and dearest': family, extended family and close friends. They may add up to 100 names.

- On your second list, enter the names of all those who you know well but to whom you are not as close as those in the first list: colleagues, members of associations or boards you belong to, suppliers, business partners, etc. You should be able to come up with at least another 100 names.
- On your third list, enter the names of everybody else you know, or your family and team knows: businesses, professionals, community leaders, etc.

Once you have established your three lists, you must determine who will approach which potential donor, when and how. Here are some tips that experience seems to dictate:

- The rule of the game is that the candidate should always be the one making the direct request. The fundraising chair and other key supporters can ensure follow-up when needed.
- The least effective way of raising funds is to simply send a letter. There is usually, at best, a five per cent response.
- The most effective tool is the phone contact saying something like: “I really want to get elected because (your vision or goal), and need to raise money to do so. I was hoping you may be interested in supporting me with a financial contribution of some kind.”
- You, the candidate, should be the only one to solicit the people on the first list. This can be done in the course of a face-to-face meeting or over the phone and, when appropriate, this first contact should be followed-up with a card or a phone call reminding the person of his or her commitment to provide some funds for your campaign.
- You, the candidate, should make the initial call to the people on the second list.
- As for the names on the third list, in consultation with your fundraising chair and campaign manager, you may choose to send a personalized letter to each one of these people indicating that a call will follow. You, the candidate, may make the call or one of your supporters who knows this person could make the initial call, followed by one from you. Your supporter could say something along these lines: “I am calling because I am supporting the candidacy of (your name) as (councillor, MLA, MP) because I really believe in what she wants to do and her ability to deliver. In fact, I have personally donated (amount) to help her. I am calling you, as a friend (or colleague) to also donate something to help her win this campaign.” If each one of your friends was able to make about a dozen such calls, this should be very effective.
- Don't forget that your spouse, partner, brothers, father, sons or father-in-law can be formidable fundraisers for you.
- Find people who are good at soliciting funds to do that job.
- Never ask a friend who is not comfortable soliciting money to do fundraising for you. It's hard to undo the impact of a reluctant salesperson.
- And, GET OUT AND DO IT: from door-to-door, at fundraising parties organized by friends in their homes (you can attend more than one a day), and pick up the phone and call.
- And make sure you receive all the money that is due from your local party association.



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