

UPDATED EDITION

# Libertarian

## POLITICAL

## Action

TECHNIQUES  
FOR EFFECTIVE  
CAMPAIGNING



A PUBLICATION OF THE LIBERTARIAN PARTY



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# AN INTRODUCTION TO CAMPAIGNING

*"Organize the whole state, so that every Whig can be brought to the polls . . . divide the county into small districts and appoint in each a sub-committee . . . make a perfect list of voters and ascertain with certainty for whom they will vote . . . and on election day see that every Whig is brought to the polls."*

**ABRAHAM LINCOLN**

*Illinois State Register, February 21, 1840*

**T**hank You. You have decided to be a warrior for liberty, as a candidate of the Libertarian party. You're ready to pontificate principles, persuade the public, and earn votes. But what's the best way to organize your campaign to achieve your goals? This manual can help answer that question, and start you on the road to being a more effective Libertarian campaigner.

This manual is written with the serious, local level candidate in mind – someone who wants to win a state representative or below seat. But the advice and strategies are applicable to any level and intensity of campaign. Don't let the amount of material enclosed worry you if you are planning on running primarily an informational campaign. No campaign at any level ever does everything in this book – no matter how well-financed or how professionally run. But the more aspects of campaigning that you cover, and cover well, the more ~~credibility you will achieve, the more votes you will~~ receive, and the more potential you'll have to recruit new LP members.

As you read this handbook, remember these points of general advice:

You are not the voter, you are weird.

■ The average person thinks about politics less than five minutes a week.

■ 33% think about politics less than once a month.

■ 25% never think about politics.

By the time you get through reading this manual, you will have used up the average person's quota of political thought for several years. Add to this the fact that as a Libertarian, you are the rarest of rare birds.

- This is not to say that the average person does not think about issues. But for most people the issues are how am I going to make the car payment and keep the kids safe on the way to school, not who's in office or some vague concept called liberty. So listen for the music the voters are hearing, not just the song you would like to play for them.

There are many ways to win elections. TV, door to door, radio, or direct mail can all be the "best way" – it depends on the variables of individual campaigns. What is important is to do whatever you do professionally. Do one thing well, not three things half-way. One good ad repeated three times is much more effective than three mediocre ones seen once.

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There are constants to winning campaigns — they develop a base of support and organization early, they target persuadable voters, they deliver the right message to the persuadables several times, and they identify their supporters and get them to the polls.

And for Libertarians they must include an enormous amount of personal contact with the voters. The campaign's time should be spent in finding those people who are already in substantial agreement, and convincing them to vote for you, not in trying to change the minds of those who are far on the other side of the fence.

Don't be afraid of contrast and controversy. The average person sees over 6,000 ad spots per week. You must stand out from your opponents to be noticed by the public. Just make sure that it is in a way that will relate positively to the average voter.

Don't be afraid to take a firm stand on the tough issues. On any controversial issue, about 1/3 of the people will be on one side, 1/3 on the other, and 1/3 in the persuadable middle. By not taking a firm stand, you alienate your supporters, fail to persuade the middle, and you'll never get the other side anyway.

Issues and principles are what you win for, not on! A Republican will believe he will win the race because he will spend the most money on the campaign. The Democrat will believe he will win because he has more door-to-door volunteers and better phone banks. The Libertarian will believe that he will win because his philosophy is pure, and his opponents are Satan

incarnate. Uh-uh. You win elections by out-working, out-thinking, out-organizing, and out-spending your opponents.

And this goes *double* for a Libertarian candidate, because of the built-in vote that the older parties have. Party ID is the single most powerful force guiding the choices of the average voter. About 60% of the voting public identifies with one of the two major parties, and about 60% of those vote that way on a fairly consistent basis. This means that some 50% of the electorate has decided who it will vote for before the parties even choose their nominees. Thus a Libertarian candidate must get virtually all the undecided vote, or must change people's minds. This is a much more difficult process than merely persuading the swing vote to come your way.

All this means you must work harder, smarter and with more money than your opponents. But the challenge is worth it. Liberty is on the line.

Thank you again for accepting the challenge.

Shout for Freedom,



**Ron Crickenberger**

Political Director

Libertarian National Committee

**PS:** This manual should only be an outline for your further studies in campaigning. Be sure to make use of the resource guide in back.

# SECTION ONE



## PREPARING TO RUN

### ■ MAKING THE DECISION

**Y**ou're a good Libertarian, basically grounded in the principles of self-government, and you feel it is time for you to do something about it. You're going to run for office and show the people of your area that there's a better way to govern.

That's all good and fine, but before you run out with your petition papers to get signatures to get your name on the ballot, there are several things you should consider, beginning with yourself.

Sit down in a chair, relax and try and look at yourself objectively. What is your energy level? Do you have the drive to go forward when it seems that the only one doing anything is you? Or, are you going to throw up your hands and say "to hell with it. I couldn't win anyway." What we are talking about here is commitment. If you aren't committed to continuing, regardless of the odds, and giving it your very best effort, then perhaps you are not ready to run for office.

While you're still in your chair, there are many other things to consider. Are you enough like your constituents that they will vote for you? Can you rally a group of supporters for an action project? Do people listen to your solutions to problems, and can you handle rejection if they don't?

How much time is there before the election? A good rule of thumb is that for any statewide office you should begin laying the groundwork for your campaign at least two years before the election. For any race involving a state office such as state senator or state representative you should begin at least 18 to 24 months before the election. For any local race, such as sheriff or school board, begin laying the groundwork at least 9 months before the election. This is not to say that if you don't have this much time you shouldn't run, but merely to point out that any Libertarian campaign which has a good chance of

winning requires at least that much advance planning. The amount of time before the election should be a determining factor in what goals you will set for the campaign. If the time is significantly less than the guidelines above, you may wish to make your campaign oriented toward party building and organizing a support base for future winnable elections.

Another thing to consider is how much money you're willing to invest in your own campaign and how much money you think you can raise through the contributions of others. It may not seem fair, but more often than not, when the best candidate loses, it is because he or she did not have enough financial backing to run an active campaign. Running a successful campaign is not cheap! For example, in a major metropolitan area, a winning race for State Representative could cost \$100,000 or more, while a winning campaign in a rural area for the same office could cost \$30,000 or less. There are ways to determine how much you are really going to need, but these will be discussed in the section on campaign finances. For now you should consider whether or not you can ask people for money, face to face, over and over. This ability is one of the most important attributes of successful candidates.

Finally, how well known are you, both favorably and unfavorably? Have you been active in community affairs for at least the last two years? Do you have any major marks against you? For example, have you ever been found guilty, or even been tried and found innocent of anything other than a traffic violation? Regardless of whether or not the courts say you are innocent, your trial is a matter of public record and you can bet your last dollar that your opponent is going to find that out and use it against you. Again, this is not to say that you shouldn't run. It is often more important how you handle a past transgression when it is brought up (and it will be in a serious race) than the fact that a problem existed. But you should be aware that it is very difficult to run an effective, forward-looking campaign if you have to be defending your past every time you turn around.

## 66 QUOTE/UNQUOTE 99

### **MOST PEOPLE WHO RUN FOR OFFICE SHOULDN'T.**

*Every two years about a half-a-million elective offices are chosen by a vote of the people.*

*And every two years, about two million candidates offer themselves to the voting public.*

*If you passed Arithmetic 1A, you'll soon realize that three-fourths of all candidates for public office lose. (the ratio is much, much higher among challengers to incumbents.)*

*And the reason they lose is usually that they shouldn't have run in the first place.*

*They didn't have enough money.*

*They didn't have any kind of base.*

*They weren't really qualified for the job*

*They didn't even know what the job they were seeking was all about.*

*They didn't have enough money.*

*They didn't have a network of supporters throughout the district.*

*They didn't understand "the issues."*

*They didn't even know what "the issues" were.*

*They didn't have enough money.*

*They were ignorant and naive regarding the process.*

*They didn't have enough money.*

**Jerry L. Russell**

"Grass Roots Campaigning" January 1992

Well, you can get up out of your chair now. How did you stack up? If you think your self-analysis has given you a clean bill of health, then it is time to start laying the groundwork.

## ■ LAYING THE GROUNDWORK

Winning campaigns start years before the election date, usually before the candidate even thinks of running for office. The public looks for political leaders who are already successful community or business leaders.

Tamara Clark's Libertarian campaign was taken seriously because she had headed a pro-choice referendum and an anti-business tax initiative. Don Gorman served on his local zoning board and held other appointed offices before being elected to the NH legislature. Your groundwork should include as many similar activities to increase your visibility as possible.

The pre-campaign phase is also the time for research. The place to start is with you, the candidate. Draw up a list of your positive attributes. Then a list of your more negative

characteristics. Go to friends and family and ask for their honest evaluation in filling out the list. Spend some time thinking of ways to capitalize on the positives. Spend more time deciding how you will handle the negatives.

Thorough research on the district and electorate should also be started far in advance of the campaign. Drive the perimeter of the district and tour any areas you are not familiar with. Determine the age, ethnic and income breakdown of the voters. Make a list of all the service clubs in the district. What special constituencies and interest groups are there? Who are the leaders, official and unofficial, of these groups? What media are based in or cover your area? Which reporters are more likely to be friendly to Libertarians?

You'll also need to research the law as it relates to your campaign. Make sure you meet the residency requirements, filing fees and any special qualifications for the office. What must you do before legally raising money? When are the reporting dates for financial disclosure reports, and what limits or other restrictions are there on contributions?

### **BEFORE ANNOUNCING YOUR CANDIDACY:**

Answer the question "why are you running?" You'll need one sentence, 30 second, 2 minute and 10 minute versions of this answer. This answer serves as the theme of your campaign. Activities should relate to the theme. Make sure your answer is relevant to the voters in your district, not just to you.

Prepare a list of everyone you know, have known or should know. You'll need addresses, phone #'s and estimates of their incomes. Include family, casual acquaintances, childhood friends, and community and business leaders you have met. List every group you belong to and try to get a membership list.

Get quality photos made. You'll need a good head shot to give to the press, and action photos (teaching a class, helping in a charity project, etc.) for your brochure.

Decide how much of your own money you can put into the campaign. Decide this now and stick to it.

**Other things to do to increase your visibility in the early phase of the campaign:**

■ Write letters to the editor, and submit some op-ed pieces. Call in to radio talk shows.

■ Join as many organizations as you have time to contribute something meaningful to.

■ Get evaluated by an appearance consultant.

■ Find armies and get in front of them. Organize a visible Libertarian presence at gun rights, pro-choice or anti-tax rallies.

■ Join Toastmasters and hone your speaking skills. Study tapes by the Advocates for Self-Government to improve communication abilities.

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■ Prepare a list of all events, fairs and parades in your district. Organize a booth and introduce yourself to the attendees.

■ Attend all the county and city council meetings in your district and speak out. Also attend the town hall meetings of politicians in your area and speak up. Ask tough questions of those in office.

■ Find out everything you can about the office you are seeking. Study the budget you will be responsible for once in office.

■ Lead a referendum, initiative or recall. Publicize illegal actions of an elected official. Georgia LP candidate Larry Bolin generated hundreds of column inches of newspaper coverage by bringing ethics charges against public officials.

■ Start your own political account – budgeting \$1000 or \$2000 per year.

■ Work for a well-organized campaign for another candidate.

■ Work on a high-visibility charity event. Ideally, be either the fundraiser or the publicity person for the event. Participate in a Walkathon or similar event where you raise money through sponsors. This both gets you used to asking for money and adds to the list of those people likely to give money to your campaign.

■ Set up a regular schedule of breakfasts or lunches with reporters and with community movers and shakers. Let them know you are thinking of running and that you want their opinions on issues and on your chances of election. In the early stages, do a lot more listening than talking.

■ Subscribe to *Campaigns and Elections* magazine. Attend a campaigning school. Take a class in fundraising. Read several books on running campaigns. Get all the training you can, there's a marathon ahead.

### ■ SETTING GOALS

All campaigns should have firm goals – tangible goals, which can be quantified as much as possible. "Reaching as many people as I can and telling them the Libertarian message" isn't sufficiently specific for the purpose of goal setting, but one or more of the following may be:

- Number of votes
- Percentage of the total vote
- Number of news stories generated
- Number of new Libertarian Party members
- Inclusion in debates or candidates' forums
- Reaching "balance of power" status in the voting results
- Raising a targeted amount of money

All of these are quantifiable. You'll know for certain whether or not you've reached them by the end of the campaign. And that should give you and your campaign team the motivation to set forth and follow a detailed game plan to achieve them. Therefore, the first thing you should do after deciding to become a candidate is to set specific goals down on paper.

How high should your goals be? Not an easy question to answer. Obviously, goals which are either too easy or outrageously difficult are not good. But they should certainly reflect what you hope to gain in this campaign, over and above what was accomplished in the previous election. If the previous Libertarian vote total was 1,000 for the district, then perhaps your goal should be 2,000 . . . or much higher.

What if you fail to achieve some or all of your goals? Who doesn't? Don't hesitate to set ambitious goals at the beginning, and let your supporters know what they are – then adjust them downwards (or upwards) as the campaign progresses. Even if you do fall short of your goals, what you learned in the process of trying to reach them should be a valuable lesson for you or anyone else who campaigns in the future. But if you don't set goals, there will be no standard by which to measure your achievements, and little solid evidence for application in future campaigns.

Should some of your goals be more important than others? Yes – your campaign might be the first of its kind in your area (in which case your highest goal could be to build the LP), or it could be a serious three-way race for election (in which case your highest goal would be the votes). The goals you adopt – the number and their priority – are up to you, but regardless of what you decide they should be, they should serve as guideposts throughout your campaign.

## SECTION TWO



# ORGANIZING THE CAMPAIGN

## ■ MESSAGE, TARGETING, ■ AND STRATEGY

**Y**our message is the answer to the question "why are you running." Your first thought at an answer is probably "I'm sick of the government taking away my rights and property. I'm running to dismantle as much of the state as possible." While this may be a valid answer, it is not one which is relevant to the average voter. You must answer the question for the voting public, not for yourself.

Your message should succinctly and clearly state the reason the voter should choose you over your opponents. Think about two winning messages from recent years: In '92 the Democratic message was "Clinton will bring change and a better economy." Bush's message was, well, he didn't have one. In '84 the Reagan message was "stay the course, things are better now than they were four years ago. Mondale's message was higher taxes. In both cases, the winning message was the one most relevant to the voters. Both messages emphasized the winner's strength and the opponents weaknesses. The right message delivered at the right time is a major factor in winning campaigns.

How do you craft a message that fits you and your principles and is still relevant and appealing enough to the voters to achieve the goals of your campaign? Answering this question involves asking a lot more, and that process is the formulation of your strategy.

A strategy answers the question "How will you achieve your electoral goal?" Facts needed to formulate the answer include a demographic profile of your district (age, party, race, etc.), an issues profile (abortion, gun rights, LP vote history, etc.), a list of both you and your opponent's strengths and weaknesses (both personal and issues) and a list of your expected high priority voters (Libertarian base voters, swing votes, and those

in the district, not registered to vote but in line with your ideas). Analyzing these lists tells you which Libertarian issues to stress with which groups of voters.

Let's say you are running in a district where the LP's statewide candidates have gotten in the 4 % range, and in the best recent partisan race for local office, in a district similar to yours, the LP's candidate got 35% in a two-way race. The district has a Republican congressman but mostly Democrats at the local level, indicating a large swing vote between the two major parties. In the 92 Election, the presidential vote totals for your district were: 36,% for Clinton, 38% for Bush, 25% Perot, 1% Marrou.

Your opponent, Sammy Statist, is a 38 year-old pro-life Republican, running for his second term. He's avowedly for lower taxes, but voted in favor of increased property taxes this term, angering the sizable senior citizen retirement community. Mr. Statist is an attorney and family man.

You are Lacy Fare, 58 year-old teacher, recently retired from the local college. You are making your first run at elected office, but have been very active in the community, as a part time counselor at the college, and as the organizer of a meals on wheels program for senior shut-ins.

Divide the population into groups expressed as percentages of the electorate. Decide which groups will be the most likely to vote for you or against your opponent and estimate what percentage of each group's vote you can earn with a good campaign. Professional polling is necessary to accurately gauge the degree of support available for the different issues you might want to address with your message. In it's absence you will have to rely on research into how candidates who have stressed different issues in the past have fared, as well as newspaper research, knowledge of previous coalitions, studying previous election returns, and input from early precinct walking.

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Multiply your estimates of earnable votes times each groups' share of the electorate. For the district described above, a simplified coalition profile might resemble the following:

80% of the LP/Perot/Independent vote (.80 x 26)	= 20.8 total points
65% of the Democrat vote (.65 x 36)	= 23.4 total points
18% of the Republican vote (.18 x 38)	= 6.8 total points
	= 51% <i>enough to win</i>

The more categories you include in your profile, the more closely you will be able to target your message and efforts toward those voters most easily persuaded to vote for you. You might want to include subdivisions of the above groups such as 27% of Republican women voters and 9% of Republican male voters, or 80% of new registrants from the college, or 65% of the pro-choice vote.

When you estimated the number of votes you could win from the Democrats, Republicans, and Perot voters, you began the process of targeting. Targeting means determining which voters are:

1. Most likely to vote,
2. Most easily persuaded to vote for you, or against your opponent.

Individual targeting refers to a voter's personal voting history. Do they always vote in Republican primaries? Lacy would probably exclude these voters from mailing and other campaign activities, in order to concentrate resources on Democrats and Independents.

Household targeting is used mainly to economize on mailings and phone work. If two or more people in a household fit your high priority voter profile, you stand a chance for more votes by mailing one piece of mail there than if only one voter in the house fits your profile.

Group targeting is used to address the concerns of single issue and ethnic groups. Lacy would want to get a list of pro-choice voters and mail to them. Enhanced voter files from a list broker often give you the capability of pulling out ethnic surnames for a special mailing. A candidate in a border state might want to send a mailing on the LP's open borders policy to voters with an Hispanic surname.

Geographic targeting is the most used form of targeting. The other forms of targeting tell you who to direct your resources toward, geographic tells you where to campaign. You should spend most of your time, especially in precinct walking, in those areas which have demonstrated by past performance susceptibility to a Libertarian message. Indicators of this include past LP candidates' performance, evidence of high swing votes, and yes/no votes on ballot issues.

Once you have defined your target voters by the above process, you should focus all your campaign efforts on those voters, so your message might be something like:

Lacy Fare understands the problems of both young and old. You can trust her to protect the right of home ownership, by exempting senior citizens from property taxes on their home. And Lacy will fight to protect a woman's right to choose.

Note that this message emphasizes the positive attributes necessary to appeal to a winning constituency:

- Lacy Fare cares
- Property tax relief
- Pro-choice.

And offers significant contrast with the opponent:

- He can't be trusted on taxes
- Anti-abortion position.

Your campaign theme is the visual representation of your message. Everything from the type of campaign appearances you make to the photos used in your brochure should re-emphasize the message. For example, Lacy's brochure should feature pictures of her in a counseling session, helping in the meals on wheels program, and speaking at a forum against the property tax.

## ■ YOUR CAMPAIGN PLAN

Once you have set the goals for your campaign, you must decide how best to implement them. A campaign plan answers the who, what, when, where, why, and how of what it will take to achieve your objectives. To be a plan it must be written, must be specific, must include definite budget figures, accountability for team members, and a time line for all activities.

In addition to serving as an internal blueprint for the campaign team to organize around, a good plan will serve as a marketing tool, both to the media and to potential supporters and contributors. You will develop much more support if you can show on paper exactly how and why your goals are achievable.

Your plan should include at least the following:

■ **Goals** – your specific objectives.

■ **Message** – the answer to the question "Why are you running?," along with your position on the two issues (no more than three!) that you will stress during your campaign. If you feel the need to have a written platform on many issues, produce that as a separate document to be given out on request.

■ **Biography** – and personal statement from the candidate. Never, never, *never* fudge even a little on the truth for your resume. You will be caught.

■ **District and office history** – a summary of the demographics of the district, description of major interest groups, analysis of the opponent and his voting record, and any relevant polling data available.

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■ **Personal and opposition research** – a listing of the positives and negatives of all the candidates in the race.

■ **Strategy and Targeting** – the methods you will use to get your message across to the people most likely to vote for you. Tells in detail how you will earn enough votes to win.

■ **Field plan** – shows how you will identify your supporters and get them out to vote on E-day.

■ **Media plan** – shows how your campaign will earn press coverage.

■ **Budget** – how the money will be spent for all the items and actions necessary to reach your goal.

■ **Fundraising plan** – who contributes and how the money is raised.

■ **Time line** – plots all events and activities that the campaign intends to undertake. This should also detail all the steps leading up to each event or activity.

After the plan is written, prepare a summary of its main points. Use this as your introduction for the complete plan. The introduction is needed for the external people it will be given to: media, high-end donors, and PACs.

Once you have written your plan, stick to it. Campaigns tend to produce a euphoric insanity, or “electoral intoxication” come October, pushing you to change direction on impulse. If it was good enough to be put in the plan when you had lots of time to think about it, it probably should stay.

## ■ SCHEDULING & TIME MANAGEMENT

Of the many resources necessary for running a good campaign, time is the only one which is not renewable. With enough work, you can get more money, volunteers, and endorsements. But you can never get more time, except by starting earlier. So a good schedule for the campaign and the candidate is imperative.

A good schedule will be based on the most effective way of reaching the most voters with the campaign’s message. So the vast majority of the campaign’s time should be devoted to fundraising and voter contact

A rule-of-thumb for the candidate’s time expenditure might be:

- 50% Fundraising
- 20% Voter Contact
- 10% Strategy
- 10% Meetings with Press and Speeches
- 5% Travel
- 5% Miscellaneous Campaign Chores

This allocation can vary considerably from one segment of the campaign to the next. For instance, in the early stages, 60% or 70% might be consumed by fundraising, and 25% on strategy and planning. Late in the campaign, the candidate may spend 50% or 60% of his time on voter contact. But the overall time expenditure should be oriented to achieving the campaign’s goals.

The campaign should have one person only in charge of scheduling the candidate’s time. And it should not be the candidate. Not only does this give the candidate an out when asked to appear at an event which does not further the campaign’s goals, but it keeps the harried candidate from over committing himself. When asked to appear anywhere or do anything, the candidate’s automatic response should be: “Please check with my scheduler.”

The ideal scheduler will be detail-oriented, and highly organized. They must be assertive enough to make the tough decision to not try to send the candidate to every event which extends an invitation. The scheduler should be tactful enough to be able to turn down the invitation without offending the inviting organization. He must have enough common sense and campaign savvy to make the decision to accept based on furthering the goals of the campaign. The scheduler should be proactive, and create events that further the goals of the campaign.

Early in the campaign the scheduler should go over with the candidate all of the personal events which must be scheduled around birthdays, weddings, graduations, etc.

## The Campaign Timeline

A campaign is nothing more than a million details. Miss one important detail and the entire plan is put at risk. The timeline for your campaign is the road map for your campaign plan. It is the “nuts and bolts” of what must be done and when. Detail as clearly as possible each thing that is to be done. Create your timeline, working backwards from election day. Begin by determining all of the things that you need to do for your campaign. Plug in mailings, fund-raisers, campaign generated events, lawn signs, whatever tactics are dictated by your plan.

The timeline is broken up into three segments: Early term, mid term and late term. In the early term you will be building up your war chest, doing your opposition research, preparing for your run, collecting your staff and volunteers. In the mid term you are working on name ID, planning your late term activities, building endorsements. In the late term you will be focused on voter contact and implementing all of the final day’s activities such as lit drops and signage.

Example: you plan to put a mailing out to the targeted independent voters in your district. You want it to arrive on August 6, the day before the primary election. Your timeline for this project would read like this:

■ **August 4:** [\$] Independent piece dropped at post office. Red tagged political.

■ **August 2:** Independent piece stuffing party at HQ. 3,000

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pieces. 15 volunteers needed

- **July 30:** [\$] Pick up independent piece at printer
- **July 21:** Master independent piece to printer
- **July 10:** Independent piece draft copy to layout (desktop publisher)
- **July 9:** Independent piece writing completed

There are other components which will need to be included in the project, such as sending the request for mailing labels to your data-processing person, sending your master list to the Cass certifier, ordering the mail tray labels from the Post Office, etc. *A million details!* Missing any of them scuttles the entire project, and you would have a bunch of volunteers show up on the appointed day with nothing to do.

Note that there are dollar signs attached to some of the items. This is to draw your attention to the fact that money will be expended to implement this item. The master timeline should have approximate budget figures attached to these components. As you work on creating your timeline, note the approximate costs involved in each. This will assist you in creating your overall campaign budget. It will also make it very clear how much money you need to have on hand and when you need to have it.

There will be many projects that require timelining. As shown in the example, a separate one for each major project is advised. However, the details of each project are also entered on the master timeline. The master timeline should contain all the components of all of the projects, to ensure that none are missed. Thus, in the example above, "Order lawn signs" might be stuck in between "Piece to printer" and "pick up piece at printer."

The campaign manager keeps control of the master timeline in order to oversee all of the projects. The person in charge of implementing a specific project has the timeline for that specific project. Using the master timeline, the manager can check up on the person in charge of the project to make sure it's on schedule. Personal appearances, which are often outside of the control of the campaign, are entered into the master timeline as they come up. Keeping the timeline on computer makes this much easier, as projects and events will change constantly, and things are added or deleted.

**A word of caution here:** Review the master timeline at your staff meetings, but collect them at the end of each meeting. Do not allow your timeline to fall into the hands of your opposition! Destroy all old copies. Do not just throw them in the trash!

## Sample Timeline

Please note the following sample timeline is generic, and not all items will apply to every campaign. The example includes only the major points, not the individual steps of each project. Most of the items would need to be "fleshed out" as in the example above. A real timeline could be 10 to 20 pages, or more. Legal deadlines are included as examples only, as they

vary widely from state to state. Be sure to include all legal deadlines in bold!

Specific dates would be applied to all items on the timeline.

## Preceding year

- List possible campaign donors and volunteers.
- Save own money for personal political account.
- Follow "How to Raise Your First \$2,500" from friends and family
- Get acceptance of campaign from family, employer
- Study communications techniques
- Join Toastmasters
- Continuing research: What local organizations need speakers?
- Subscribe to *Campaigns & Elections*, and *Grass Roots Campaigning* magazines
- Attend candidate training forums
- Subscribe to all local newspapers
- Write letters to the editor for visibility and practice
- Get past election results for analysis/strategy
- Attend all Libertarian Party meetings in state to recruit volunteers and practice public speaking
- Get wardrobe/appearance in shape if necessary
- Research all legal deadlines

## January

- First fundraising letter/newsletter (continue one a month until end of campaign)
- Research for office begins: Constitution (state or federal) Basic Issues Possible opposition voting history Legality of yard signs in all municipalities Opposition FEC reports or other financing reports
- Recruit campaign manager and committee
- Get/establish media contacts list
- Write position papers.
- If federal candidate, file FEC report to begin fundraising cycle
- Order voter list from county or vendor
- File candidacy with Secretary of State
- Announce candidacy within party circles.
- Hold first campaign meeting
- Write campaign plan
- Write campaign budget

## February

- Introductory letter to friendly PACs
- Begin regular "dialing for dollars" program by candidate
- Decide on campaign themes/communication/slogan
- Design graphics for campaign — all art work — professional, matching message
- Design preliminary print ad
- Write/design/produce pamphlet/handout
- Get map of district and learn it thoroughly
- Set up two phone lines: fax machine, campaign-only phone with answering machine; recommend call-waiting &

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three-way calling

- Set up PO Box/mail forwarding if desired
- File necessary forms with state Libertarian Party

## March

- Plan fundraising dinner for May
- Begin precinct walking ( continues until election)
- Follow primaries
- Design skeleton press release
- Watch for public events to schedule in Spring/Summer
- Recruit primary-day petitioners
- Write libertarian-friendly stump speech
- Initial expenses – purchase: letterhead bumper stickers pamphlet / handouts PRESS KIT Good photo; enough 5x7s to give 3 to every press outlet Candidate's badge Business cards
- Attend state convention get nomination

## April

- File campaign disclosure reports
- Official candidacy announcement – send press releases, press kit
- Start contacting relevant campaign-related people: League of Women Voters Possible issues-related endorsees
- Look into friendly groups for fundraising/direct mail Gun rights organizations Small business Other issues groups
- Primary day: PETITIONING
- Candidate's daughter's birthday

## May

- Fundraising dinner
- Opposition research continues
- Review this timeline for possible changes!
- Petitioning continues; set intermediate goals, review status often
- Direct mail petitions (coordinate with other local candidates)
- Write/send issues or ideas-related press releases – two per month through August
- Hold campaign picnic, party, or some other social event
- Watch media closely for large public events/petitioning opportunities

## June

- Fundraising car wash
- Take yearly vacation! Rest up!
- Petitioning continues
- Letter to the editor – issues/ideas
- Develop absentee voter plan
- Reserve fair booth space for August
- Obtain location for phone banks
- Candidate's son's graduation

## July

- Petitioning continues – July 4th weekend, especially parades
- Petitioning deadline – end of month. Goal: Finish two to

three weeks early

- Press release to close petitioning, announce successful signature-gathering and legal status as candidate
- First order of yard signs
- Write generic stump speech
- Attend national Libertarian Party convention

## August

- Turn in petitions, issue press release
- 2nd Wednesday: County candidate's night; stump speech
- Delivery of first yard signs to most active volunteers
- Volunteer's meeting – get them foaming at the mouth!
- Letter to the editor: issues
- Plan Labor Day event/attendance; write Labor Day press release
- Attempt to meet with political reporters in-person at their offices
- Write radio and TV commercial
- Work fair booth

## September

- Labor Day – official start of campaign season for the press Send Labor Day press release – two days ahead
- Schedule campaign meetings – one per week through election day
- Debate rehearsal: Write answers to 30 issues questions, closing
- Debate rehearsal with others
- Debates begin
  - > Have signs at debates one hour ahead of time
  - > Get word out to supporters – be at debates!
- Design election-day handout
- Second order of yard signs (Size of order based on fundraising)
- Press Releases – switch from issues-related to event-related, two per month through election day
- Produce radio/TV ads
- Line up poll watchers
- Distribute friend-to-friend letter kits
- Develop GOTV plan
- File disclosure reports

## October

- (Voter registration deadline)
- File disclosure reports
- Pick up friend-to-friend letter kits for mailing by campaign
- Schedule radio ads as funds permit
- Schedule print ads as funds permit
- Direct mail to voters as funds permit
- Tracking polls
- Order polling place handouts
- Debates / appearances
- Early: Second delivery of yard signs
- Yard signs flood: Target uptime two-and-a-half to three weeks before election day
- GOTV!

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## November

- Election night gathering
- Write election day press release — telling press where you can be reached on election night
- Tell opponent(s) where you can be reached on election night
- Election Day — poll workers, poll watchers
- Crew in place for sign removal
- Write/send post-election press release
- Write wrap-up thank-you letters to donors, volunteers, helpful organizations, etc.
- Hold or attend social event for volunteers, and donors.
- Post-mortem: What went right, what went wrong, what can be learned

## ■ THE BUDGET

Your campaign budget should be based on two factors:

1. How much money will it take to achieve the campaign goals?
2. How much can you raise?.

If your goal is to win the election, it is fairly easy to get a rough estimate of the amount it will take to have a reasonable chance of success. You will need returns for the past 2 to 3 elections for the office you are seeking, and the campaign expense reports for each of the candidates who sought the office.

Let's say you have 10 thousand voters in the district. You've studied the election returns to find that there has been an average turn out of 60% or 6 thousand votes over the last three elections. You'll need a minimum of 3001 votes in a 2-way race or 2001 in a 3-way race to win.

Next compare the expense reports with the number of votes each candidate received and determine the most money spent per vote, whether or not the candidate won. Multiply the highest dollar amount spent per vote times the number of votes needed, and you will have an approximation of the amount needed to win as a major party candidate.

As a candidate for the LP, you'll need to add at least 50% to this figure, possibly double or triple it, in order to make up for the built-in party identification the Dems and Reps have. You may need further adjustments to accommodate changes in population, and for times when the incumbent has run unopposed.

Next, determine a realistic estimate of how much money you can expect to raise. Use all of the potential contributors lists you gathered in the groundwork phase, and fill in the minimum donation you can expect from each individual and group. Cut the total amount in half to get an amount you should be able to

count on raising. If the amount you can raise is much smaller than the amount needed to win, you may want to consider this campaign as a stepping stone toward running a winning campaign next-time, and make your plans accordingly.

Now draw up a gross expenditure budget.

Make a list of all the things you need and want for your campaign, and determine the costs. These will include:

1. Ballot drive expenses (if any)
2. Filing fee (if any)
3. Brochures
4. Postage for direct mail
5. Postage for press releases
6. Letterhead stationary, Envelopes
7. Reply cards, Reply envelopes
8. Photographs
9. Printing other than brochures (e.g. position papers)
10. Artwork or graphics
11. Equipment rental
12. Posters/billboards
13. Bumper stickers, Buttons
14. Paid Media, TV, Radio, Newspaper
15. Radio advertising
16. Salary or contract services
17. Office or headquarters rental
18. Telephone
19. Special events, rallies, etc.
20. Voter Files, registration records.

This does not mean that you should have all of the above items in your campaign, or that you should not have other items. List everything you can think of, even though you may ultimately write "Zero" in the budget next to some items.

When all the costs are assigned to each item in your "wish list," the total will probably be far in excess of both the dollar amount needed to win and the amount you can expect to raise. Now prioritize until the wish list is pared down to match the amount you need to win.

When setting your priorities for the budget, keep in mind the specific goals of the campaign. Ask yourself, "Would spending X amount of dollars in this manner produce the Y result that I need?" And since voter contact is essential to the achievement of any electoral goal, you should budget 75% or more of your budget to direct voter contact.

Once you have prepared the gross expenditure budget, use those figures and your campaign time line to plot out on a weekly basis how much money you will spend on each budget line item. This gives you a timed expenditure budget.

Next, formulate a timed income budget by placing on the time line week by week all the expected sources of income.

Having the three different forms of budget will give you a

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good sense of cash flow, and enable you to anticipate cash short-falls in time to do something about them. Good budgeting makes each expenditure the most effective.

### ■ CAMPAIGN STAFF

It's never a good idea for the candidate to be his or her own campaign manager, or treasurer. The functions are very different, and the candidate's highest and best use is to be the candidate, rather than to be forced to make decisions about where to speak, what colors to use in the brochure, how to raise money, or how much to pay for a headquarters.

Of course, the ultimate decision in any dispute will be the candidate's, and there's no reason for the candidate not to participate in important decisions so long as they're not taking time away from campaigning. But he or she should feel equally free not to participate in campaign affairs, because there's already a trustworthy campaign manager and staff in place doing their jobs.

Individual roles in the campaign should be divided up by function, and should include the Campaign Manager, the Media Coordinator, the Headquarters Manager, a Volunteer Coordinator, the Research Director, the Ballot Drive Coordinator, etc., etc. Remember, these are functions, not necessarily separate and distinct people. You may not have enough volunteers to staff such positions. In a very small campaign, for example, the Campaign Manager may agree to take on all of the other roles as well. But it is important to outline each function which needs to be performed in your campaign, and to assign responsibility for performing them.

How do you get people to take responsibility for certain functions? First, of course, you have to ask them to – but there's more to it than that. Most volunteers, even the most eager, are inexperienced or uncertain about what you need. Your job is to give each one the tools needed to get the job done, and that means a specific job description and an estimate of the time needed. For example, you could approach a potential Media Coordinator and ask, "Will you be the Media Coordinator for the campaign?" and leave it at that. Or you could say, "I'd like you to be my Media Coordinator. I'd like to send out two news releases per week, hold three news conferences, and appear on five talk shows. I figure this will take about ten hours per week – will you do that?" Obviously, the second approach makes it much easier for the prospective Media Coordinator to accept because you've given him, in two short sentences, a specific idea of what you need. The first approach doesn't give any idea at all.

A campaign in which all the roles are clearly defined and assigned, and in which everyone concerned knows what he or she is expected to do, is a far smoother campaign than one in which everyone is spending half their time just figuring out

what they're supposed to be doing – and ending up leaving the important decisions to the candidate.

### Getting People Involved

Much of the foregoing assumes that the candidate already has a respectable number of people willing to be involved in the campaign in some way. But what if you don't? What if your campaign is a "pioneer" effort, where you seem to be virtually the only active Libertarian in your area, and where your main goal is simply to build up the size and abilities of the Libertarian Party? Or, what if all the familiar faces in the party – the "old timers" – think it's great that you're running and might even give you a check, but say they're "too busy" or are "too burned out" to really do anything?

Unless you're determined to do absolutely everything yourself – which won't build the party and won't work very well, either – you must find a way to involve new people in your campaign. And the most important tool you have to do this is a mailing list of members, contributors, and interested people which your state party has compiled over the years.

Take a look at the list. Chances are you won't recognize a lot of the names, and in many cases it won't be because they're people who don't want to do anything. Most Libertarian Party mailing lists are full of people who have never been contacted personally and have never been asked to get involved. A reasonably high percentage of them can become active in your campaign if you're willing to put in some initial hard work (which will be easier than to try to activate old-timers who don't have any time to give you). From the total list, cull the names of those who live near your city. Don't worry if they're members or merely inquiries.

Now carefully plan an event. Typically, this is a "Campaign Kick-Off" or similar affair. Take the names on the mailing list from your area and send them an attractive invitation to the event, then plan to follow up by telephone.

Remember, you're not looking for scores and scores of people. Chances are you'd settle for 5 or 10 good new activists. So if your net list contains 100 names, be pleased if 20 agree to show up and half of them agree to work for you. Later, you can call those who couldn't attend, to see if they're interested in another event or project.

Hold the event preferably in a convenient semi-public place, such as a small room in a large hotel. Make the room small enough so that if only 20 people show up, they won't feel lost in a giant cavern. Have a planned program for the event; perhaps a Libertarian film, plus three or four speakers, including the candidate, who will speak for 5 or 10 minutes apiece. Have wine and cheese, or cocktails and hors d'oeuvres. If you charge admission at all, make it nominal, no more than \$5.00. Have a sign-in sheet at the door for the names, addresses, and phone numbers of the people who show up. And be sure to have a "volunteer form" distributed to whomever

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shows up which will allow them to volunteer for your campaign.

You have a specific message to convey at this event: To introduce and talk about the Libertarian Party, to show how your campaign fits into the purpose of the party, and to demonstrate a concrete accomplishment that your campaign will achieve if it has help. Then you must directly and specifically ask for the help of the people in attendance. Keep in mind that most people become active for psychological reasons — they want to become part of an effort to accomplish something good and worthwhile. That's the appeal you have to make at this event.

To restate in the form of a checklist: 1) arrange for a suitable meeting place; 2) prepare a simple, informative, attractive invitation and mail it to your list (roughly three weeks before the event); 3) call the entire list and ask them to attend (roughly two weeks before the event); 4) call the people who have agreed to attend and remind them of the event (roughly the week before); 5) maintain the schedule and purpose of the event by making it brief, enjoyable, interesting, and directed toward the goal of developing new activists.

Doing this is going to cost you something in terms of time and money; renting the room, furnishing the refreshments, mailing the invitations, making the calls. You'll probably be able to enlist the physical or financial aid of one or two of the old-timers. If you're truly unable to handle such an event as this, the key thing is to establish personal contact with the people on your mailing list and to ask them to get involved. If all you can do is get on the phone and ask people to come to an envelope-stuffing party, that's better than not making the effort at all.

One last point about old and new activists: Once you've recruited a few new faces to help you, some of the old-timers who were previously "too busy" will miraculously find that they have some time and will get reinvolved. And, as for new activists, never get bogged down in worrying about whether or not they're "real" libertarians. A lot of them won't be. But remember that most Libertarians developed their political beliefs through exposure to other Libertarians. So let the new people get active and involved, and they'll find that their understanding of libertarianism gets progressively stronger by interacting with you and your campaign.

### ■ FUNDRAISING

Almost no one likes asking for money. When candidates decide to run for office, their vision is on the glamour aspect; making speeches, ripping the opponent to shreds in debates, and cutting TV commercials. But money is what wins elections. While financial underdogs do occasionally pull off upsets, money is the single most dominating factor in the vast majority of campaigns. In virtually every race that Libertarians have won, they have outspent their opponents.

Money gives you communication with the voters. Time spent on fundraising will enable you to reach more voters more often than the same amount of time spent in other methods of campaigning. Fifty to sixty percent of the campaigns and the candidate's time should be spent raising money. Unlike scheduling and other detail work, fundraising is not something left up to a manager or committee. The candidate must be involved in a major way. After all, that's who the people are supporting. Contributors are more likely to give money to a good person with a good idea than they are to a good idea alone. Candidates must have enough belief in themselves to ask for financial demonstrations of personal support, and in the Libertarian philosophy to ask people to make generous investments in their own personal freedom. You are not begging for a handout. If you can't ask for money to advance what you believe in, does it mean you don't really believe that Liberty is worth supporting?

The only real impediment to your raising the money you need is overcoming the fear of personal embarrassment. But it's extremely difficult to offend a person by asking him or her for money. This is not to say that the people you ask will necessarily say yes, but in virtually all cases, the worst they will do is say no. A surprisingly high percentage will say yes if asked and asked correctly.

Fundraising, like sales, is essentially a numbers game. Ask a certain number of people to contribute, and a certain percentage will say yes and the remainder will say no ("I'll think about it" or "Maybe later" qualify as "no" answers). Therefore, the ideal way to raise money successfully is not to worry about people who have already said no, but to concentrate on finding others who will say yes.

### Why People Donate

People give money, in descending order, for shared relationships, fear of pain, or shared values.

■ Your shared relationship donor list should include, in roughly descending order, relatives, friends, business associates, your Christmas card list, neighbors, members of organizations you are active in, candidates you have contributed to, your high school and college classmates, owners of stores you patronize, and everyone you have written a check to in the last several years. In other words, you are going to ask everyone you know or have known. For these people you will stress the relationship, not the philosophy, in your pitch to solicit dollars.

■ Fear is a wonderful motivator. Al Capone is rumored to have said, "You can get a lot more with a kind word and a gun, than you can with a kind word alone." If you can make potential donors feel a gun is pointed at them to take away their property, reproductive, gun or other rights, and that their life and the future of humanity depend on their making a contribution now, you will have donations. If this sounds like overkill, think for a moment about how much money TV preachers take in and why.

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■ Letting people know that you share and are actively promoting their values will also translate into funds. Single-issue organizations are where many of your long term donors will come from. This type of appeal does stress philosophy, but in an active, demonstrable way.

■ If you can combine all three motivators, you have a sure bet.

### Other Key Points

■ An integral part of your fundraising program is a "Thank You" mechanism. Every contributor, no matter how small, should receive a thank-you note as soon as possible. If the number of contributors is too large, prepare a form thank-you letter (sign it personally) to be sent to small contributors, but maintain a personal response for large ones.

■ The most likely contributors are those who have already given, and the higher the original contribution, the higher the next one is likely to be. If you can show your prospect that his contribution has already made a significant difference, it is relatively easy to ask for another: "Your \$100 really helped get us on the ballot. Now that we're on, we need to open a headquarters and start the campaign. Would you be willing to double your earlier contribution?"

■ Always ask for specific amounts of money, and don't be afraid to shoot high. A good place to start is with your estimate of 3% of the person's income. If you know a prospect has already given \$50, chances are he's likely to be able to give \$100, so ask him for it. If he can't he'll tell you, but he won't be offended. Conversely, if you don't ask for a specific amount, the prospect will never give as much as he can afford; he'll give the least possible amount.

■ Publicly recognize your contributors whenever possible. If your campaign has a newsletter, run a list of contributors. Read off the names of your contributors at events. It's not necessary to mention the amounts, although it's not bad to do so with generous contributors so long as you have their permission in advance.

■ Use specific expenses which need to be paid for: "We need money for the campaign" is far less persuasive than "We need \$400 for brochures" or "We need \$1000 for yard signs." Make contributors feel that they have made the difference in purchasing key items or services: "Your \$25 contribution will buy us one radio ad on WZYX." Donors prefer to contribute toward visible action items, such as TV ads, or to file a lawsuit fighting discrimination against an LP candidate. Asking for money for overhead items such as a headquarters or phone bill is less "sexy" and is usually a mistake.

■ The more personal an appeal is, or appears to be, the more likely it is to succeed. The ways of raising money, in order of their effectiveness, are:

1. Face to face solicitation by the candidate.

2. Telephone solicitation by the candidate.
3. Face to face solicitation by finance committee members.
4. Telephone solicitation by committee members.
5. Group appeals at events.
6. Group event sales.
7. Hand addressed, hand signed direct mail.
8. Obviously bulk rate direct mail.

### ■ PERSONAL SOLICITATION

*"Money comes in direct proportion to the amount of time the candidate spends fundraising. The candidate should fundraise 3 hours a day five days a week. Fundraising comes before the chicken and the egg!"*

**Cathy Allen**

President of Campaign Connection, and consultant on over 80 winning campaigns.

Facing someone, explaining why the money is needed, and asking him directly for it will, in the long run, yield the highest contributions from the greatest percentage of people. If it is possible to identify every potential contributor to your campaign and approach that person for money on a one-on-one basis, you should do so.

You will need to develop two distinctly different pitches, one for relationship donors, and the other for shared value donors. Of course for some people you will combine elements of both. The themes from these pitches should also be used in phone and mail fundraising, and, in the case of shared value donors, should relate to your over-all campaign message.

With relationship donors, you are not out to convert them to Libertarianism. Play up the relationship instead. Your script should go something like: "Dad, good news. You've always encouraged me to get involved, to try to make a difference. Well, I'm running for the state legislature, and I need my family's backing. I want you to give me (3-5% of their gross income, or double the highest donation you know of that they have ever given to another candidate or charity)."

A pitch for a businessman you spend money with might go like: John, you've been my doctor for 8 years now, and I've spent hundreds of dollars with you. I want you to know it's been worth every penny for your good service. You know I'm running for state representative. I'd like to ask you to spend some money with me. Will you write me a contribution of (2-3% of gross income) for my campaign?"

After you ask for a specific amount, SHUT UP. It is the donor's turn to respond. The next 15 seconds while you are waiting for an answer will seem like an eternity, but keep quiet. If you talk first after the specific request, you'll lose dollars. DON'T say "please give \$500.00 or whatever you can afford." This gives the prospect an out, and is a big mistake.

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If (when) you get excuses or objections, listen to the donor's reasons, and repeat them back to the prospect, if possible with a sympathetic anecdote: "Yeah, I know how hard it is to send kids to college. I've got two youngsters in private schools myself." Then answer their objection: "But just think how much more affordable it would be for both of us if we could get the government out of the education business. That's exactly why you should contribute to my campaign." You have answered their objection in a way that steers the conversation back to areas of agreement. Be a good listener, and don't interrupt.

Ask at least three times. Use a different hook each request. And don't go down too quickly on the amount you ask for. Let them know what others are giving to the campaign. If they say no three times, ask once more for an amount that anyone can give. If they can't give anything, ask for their advice, for their time, and if it is all right to call back at a later date.

Get the check now. Don't settle for a pledge, settle for a contribution. Try to remove any excuses they have for delaying the donation. If they don't have their checkbook with them, ask, "what time tomorrow can I send someone by to pick it up." Thank them profusely. And send them a written thank you also, as soon as possible.

### ■ TELEMARKETING

Most of the advice for face to face solicitation also applies to telephone appeals. While you can't look your prospect in the eyeballs, you're still conveying a very personalized request. A small number of people can contact a large number of prospects this way; generally speaking, a list of 20 or 25 names is not an excessive demand for a telephone fundraiser, which means that four people can contact a list of 100 prospects in one or two evenings of calling.

The candidate should concentrate on calling family, friends, high end donors, and previous donors. Use peers or other volunteers to call lists that are "colder." One good trick is to use two or three assistants to the candidate during phoning sessions. The assistants give the scripted message to the prospects, then the candidate gets on the phone to close the sale. Never let the candidate call alone. The peer pressure of a group is needed for successful volunteer telefundraising.

Here's a hot tip to combine your telemarketing efforts with your mail fundraising into a dynamic, coordinated, and highly personalized program.

1. Personalizing each letter with the prospect's name in the greeting and again in the P.S. is best.
2. The P.S. will read, "I'll be calling you next Thursday between 5:00 and 9:00 P.M. to get your input and advice on my campaign."
3. Mail your letters out 50 at a time to be called in one 3 to 4 hour time slot.

This sets up the prospect to expect to give, and really impresses them with your level of organization, also prompting a donation. Most importantly, it locks the candidate into doing the calls that are so critical to a successful fundraising plan.

The candidate should be able to call 15 prospects per hour, connect with 7, and get money from 4. With a \$40.00 average donation you should raise \$500.00 per shift from your prime list.

### ■ SPECIAL EVENTS

Group solicitations are the third most powerful. By this is meant situations such as banquets, cocktail parties, etc., where a group request is made. These can be tremendous successes or total failures depending upon the kind of pitch that is made and the advance preparation and follow-up. Absolute minimum requirements include a skilled "pitch" person, response cards and/or envelopes distributed to everyone in attendance before the pitch is made, and collectors to circulate around the room picking up checks and pledges immediately after the pitch.

Special events which involve the selling of goods or services, such as garage sales, bake sales, car washes, etc. can be successful once people have been drawn to the event and understand that they're not there just to buy the cute little lamp but to contribute to a political campaign. Banquets or parties which have an admission price far above the cost of the food or beverages fall generally into this category; again, the trick is to get people there. In general, you will make more money for the campaign for the amount of time invested with other forms of fundraising.

### ■ DIRECT MAIL

Campaigning through the mail is relatively easy — print up your message, address it, pay the postage and send it. You don't expect a return, except in the voting booth.

Fundraising through direct mail is another problem. You do need a return: Money. There are specific techniques which can be used to increase the return. Therefore, the direct mail fundraiser must be concerned with the recipients, the message, the style, the appearance, and a number of picky but important details.

It can't be emphasized strongly enough that direct mail is the least powerful method of raising money, and it should be used only if 1) your list of prospects is too large to be called, and 2) in connection with a telephone follow-up. Even if your list is too large, you should identify top prospects and plan to call them as a follow-up to the mailer. But to rely exclusively on direct mail for funds is a serious mistake.

#### Why Use Direct Mail?

If you believe a significant source of funds exists among a large number of people who are not within the personal reach

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of your campaign, use direct mail to raise funds.

For example: If you are the only LP candidate in your state or major geographical area, you should send a fundraising letter to a list of libertarians in that state or area, or even to the libertarians in an adjoining state or area if there is no LP candidate there.

Another example: You or a key volunteer in your campaign belongs to a group which, while not explicitly libertarian, favors some issue or position which you also favor. A tax protest group fits this pattern, assuming that the membership knows you or knows of you already and is sympathetic to your message.

Warning: Appeals to groups who take a libertarian position on a given issue (e.g. gun control), but where there has not been any direct personal involvement with the candidates are rarely successful.

### The Team Approach

Consider the possibility of forming a Campaign Committee on behalf of all the Libertarian candidates in one particular area, and raising funds from potential sources as a team. Costs — and returns — would be shared.

Be careful before you jump into this, though. You may have valid reasons to campaign on your own — your stature in the community, for instance, or another LP candidate who just isn't a good candidate (it happens) and with whom you don't want to identify. But "teaming" your direct mail fundraising can be a good way to hold down costs, which almost always have to be paid up front.

### The Trade-Off

The methods you use in your direct mail fundraising will depend upon money, volunteers, and the size of your mailing list. There is always a trade-off between economy and appearance.

On the basis of appearance alone, the best fundraising advice would be a hand-addressed envelope on a high-quality paper stock, bearing a "live" first class stamp. The inside letter would be individually typed and addressed to the recipient by name. You (or whoever is writing the letter) would sign each one individually.

### Personalizing Mass Mail

If time or quantity prevents such methods, there are ways to make your appeal appear to be personal. And the more personal your appeal, the more effective it will be.

The envelope will appear more personal if hand-addressed rather than labeled. Volunteers can address envelopes for weeks before the mailing goes out. Similarly, a "live" first class stamp appears more personal. If you are cutting costs, a "live" third class stamp can be used. A bulk rate indicia virtually

screams, "This is a mass mailing." An envelope that appears as if it has 20,000 identical twins starts out with two strikes against the possibility that the recipient will want to respond to the message in the letter.

The letter itself should be printed, not mimeographed or duplicated in some obviously cheap manner. If the quantities are manageable, print your letter to leave space for individual names and addresses to be typed in over the body of the letter, along with a "Dear (name)." Again, if the quantity is small enough to handle, sign each letter individually. If you can't, have the printer use blue ink for the signature to set it off from the black type.

If you can't individually enter names and addresses at the top of each letter, consider ways to avoid the "Dear Friend" cliché. One method is to omit the standard greeting altogether and to substitute a "Memo" format: "To: Friend of the Smith Campaign; From: Art Jones, Campaign Manager." Using the "Dear Friend" is not always bad, but it, again, virtually screams "Mass Mailing!"

The "P.S." at the end of the letter is the second most read part and thus the second most important part of the letter. It should re-state the message of the letter, and move the reader directly to the reply piece. This may be typed, or you can try a handwritten message if it is legible, again printed in blue ink.

### General Appearance

The overall appearance of the entire piece should be clean and classy. Don't sacrifice quality in fundraising. People like to think that you're worth giving to. So, spend the extra dollars for two colors, or for a cream-colored paper instead of white, if you think it helps the appearance.

Many of the rules for other printed matter apply equally to fundraising letters. Leave big margins and have lots of white space. Skip a line between paragraphs, although the paragraphs themselves should be single-spaced. Underlining important words or phrases in the body of the copy tends to make it appear more interesting, but underlining can be overused and is not absolutely necessary.

If you can, have a prominent person agree to sign your letter and lend his or her own personal letterhead to the envelope and stationary. If your appeal is to libertarians exclusively, ask a well-known libertarian. If you are mailing to an interest group, ask a well-known member of that group.

### The Message

Asking for money is exactly like making a sales presentation for a product or service. The letter should grab the reader's attention immediately, lead him through a logical chain of reasoning, and get him with a "hook" (an appealing reason to contribute). Finally, ask for the contribution. Just as there is "no tomorrow" in selling, you must create a sense of urgency and immediacy. Otherwise, the desire to give will disappear quickly.

## Libertarian Political Action

1) **"Grab the reader's attention."** The first paragraph must hit the reader between the eyes. The first line is the most read and the most important part of the entire letter. It should be of headline quality, if not headline form. One method is to ask a question which requires an answer. Another is to come up with a startling fact or statistic which will be of immediate interest, or to predict some impending disaster if some action is not taken.

2) **"Lead him through a logical chain of reasoning."** Build a solid foundation on which to base the appeal. Cite facts and figures. Create images of future events which might happen if there is sufficient support. Be persuasive.

3) **"Get him with a 'hook.'"** The "hook" is the specific reason or reasons to contribute right now, which you are assuming have great appeal to the reader. Be very specific.

There are a variety of hooks. One is to state that the need is so desperate that your campaign will quite literally grind to a halt if you don't get support. Desperation works very well, if true.

More positive hooks include the prospect of helping to support something specific. In the case of a campaign, specific projects — one or two — can be cited, along with specific dollar amounts. For instance: "Your \$50 will help us to buy 60 seconds of prime time advertising."

4) **"Ask for the contribution."** This is directly analogous to "Ask for the order" in sales. If the reader is still with you by the end of the letter, he knows that you want money. But, he is highly unlikely to respond unless you ask him directly for a specific amount in your concluding sentences. That means writing, "Send \$50 today!" or something which sounds peremptory, demanding, and downright not nice, but which must be done.

This is very important: Ask for a specific amount and don't be afraid to shoot high. Many first-time fundraisers ask for insignificant amounts because they are afraid of offending someone. This is absolutely wrong. If you need \$50, ask for it. Don't ask for \$10 and hope you'll get \$50. You won't. But if you ask for \$50, you may get \$10, and you may get \$50. In any case, you won't offend anyone if you have presented your case properly.

### Style, Language, Grammar, and Length

Style is important, but almost impossible to teach. In general, write the letter as if it were to a specific person, attempting to convince him to do something.

Language is not so important, except for the "don'ts." In other words, it is perfectly OK to use contractions and colloquialisms if they fit the general tone of the letter, and they probably should. However, don't use words which require an extensive session with the dictionary, or which are libertarian

"in" words. Write it to read quickly, with two or three syllable words, with no more than 21-word sentences nor more than six lines per paragraph.

Grammar and spelling are extremely important. Have someone proofread the copy for such errors. The author should never be the proofreader.

Length is totally irrelevant. Again, many first-timers are afraid to write more than one page. This is wrong. Successful fundraising letters can be one page or twenty pages. It's the content that counts. Don't omit necessary or compelling details in your letter, any more than you would fail to give a complete sales presentation.

Unless you are convinced your letter is a masterpiece, show it to someone who knows more about direct mail fundraising than you do for comments and criticisms. This thing is costing you a lot of money, and it should pull a maximum return. There are professionals who make their living writing these letters; as a last resort, pay one of them to write your letter for you.

### Making The Reply Easy

Assume you have written an effective letter, made a clean and classy appearance, and have convinced your readers to send you the money you need right now. Make sure, then, that he has sufficient tools to do so. These include:

1) A **"reply piece."** This is the card with the name, address, amount given, and legal information (if necessary). It should look like something you can't throw away, a bill. Use action colors for the reply card, red, orange, or yellow. Green produces the lowest response rate. Make it idiot proof! Include "Make check payable to . . ."

The reply form should resell the letter. The message on the bounceback should be an extension of the message in the letter, and as specific as possible, such as: "Yes, I agree that Hal Smith is the best candidate for Assembly, and should be heard by as many people as possible. Here's my check for \$250\_\_\_ \$100\_\_\_ \$50\_\_\_ \$(other)\_\_\_."

Note that specific amounts are suggested. Never leave the amount open. The "(other)" space should be at the very end, with plenty of gap, in dollars, between the preceding amount and \$0.

Also very important is the inclusion of the required legal information pertaining to correct address, campaign treasurer, occupation of the donor, and all that mumbo-jumbo which varies from state to state. Remember that you can be prosecuted for leaving off this information.

Sometimes, you can include information on the card which won't fit neatly into the body of the letter. Favorable quotes from the media or from well-known people are examples. Also, request their phone number.

2) **The Business Reply Envelope (BRE).** Always, always,