



**1. You don't have to know everything before you run. And you don't need to be rich.**

What matters is that you care enough to run. There will always be people in any arena who will know less and know more than you. The question is, do I care enough? And am I willing to do more of both. More caring and more learning.

**2. Ask a lot of questions.**

If you're running for local office, you're going to want to ask questions — to people who have run before, people who have done the job, even the person who currently holds the office. What was their day-to-day like? How big was their team? How much money did they raise? What did they do to campaign? Is the election a partisan race? Be a sponge.

**3. Figure out your win number and your vote goal.**

You're running to win, but that doesn't mean you don't need to get *everyone* to vote for you. You just need more votes than your competitor. How many votes is that? Here's how to calculate it: Find the turnout numbers from the last few similar elections and average them. Then multiply that number by the number of registered voters in your jurisdiction. You'll want to aim for more than 50% of whatever that number is.

**4. Build your own campaign staff and don't ever turn down help**

Your team should be a mix of people who know you well and people who know campaigns well. Every race is different, but you'll probably want to find someone to manage money, a communications director and a volunteer coordinator. And every team needs a campaign manager.

After the big roles are filled, there are plenty of smaller tasks that need to be powered by humans: literature drops, phone calls, building and installing signs, knocking on doors, making food, etc. When people offer to help, give them a job.

**5. Campaigns, even in this modern era, are won in person.**

From door-knocking to big gatherings, a five-minute conversation goes a long way. When people see your name on the ballot — you want them to know who you are and what you stand for. Your campaign should keep track of every interaction with someone who might be interested in helping you or voting for you.

In larger districts, you won't be able to meet everyone. So focus on the people who are most likely to support you.

Go to your local election's office and request targeted info. It might cost money, but you should be able to get the party registration and addresses of registered voters in your district so you know where to campaign most efficiently.

**6. Fundraising isn't scary!**

In a lot of cases, fundraising is the difference between a winning and a losing campaign. You might not think you need that much money, but think through your expenses — from a website domain to a campaign office to stamps — and set a goal for how much you need to raise.

In general, people won't just offer you money, you're going to have to be the one to make the ask. But remember, you're not asking for money for yourself, you're asking for money to support change that you and the donor believe in. People often feel more connected to your campaign and motivated to help if they have a financial stake, even a small one.

**7. And finally, get out the vote before the election**

This is really different depending on how your district votes. Whether it's in person on election day, or early, or by mail. The important thing is that you don't assume everyone you talked to is going to get out and vote for you — you have to ask them to.