

How To Become President of the United States?

This document is intended to lay out the structure of the nomination process and the campaign that a political leader running for the presidential nomination of his party would need to consider. It outlines the issues that would need to be considered and the concrete steps that need to be taken to launch a presidential campaign in the United States.

While the nomination contests that the two parties undertake are very similar, there are nuances that distinguish the two campaigns. But for the purposes of this paper, I am going to gloss over them. Of course, local party bosses, political structures and important coalitions groups are different for both parties. Having the endorsement of the head of a powerful labor union is not important for Republicans, but critical for Democratic candidates. In both cases, the role of powerful figures like this is important within the nominating process of both political parties.

The name of the game is the accumulation of delegates, awarded by each state as they hold their nomination contests. The parties use different rules to award delegates, and the type of election varies from state to state (caucuses, primaries and conventions are all by the states). Some primaries are elections conducted by state and local officials, while others are entirely party run affairs. The Democrats award their delegates proportionally based on election results. Up until the 2012 nomination contest, the GOP has used a winner-take-all approach (more on this later). Regardless of the variety of methods used to actually award delegates, I am going to focus on a general rather than a more academic approach to these nu-

ances. In the US, the nomination is more similar than different between the parties, even if there are some nuances in each.

This paper will focus on party positioning/ideological composition of the electorate, the importance of the early states, key personnel, building the campaign team, the Republican Party's revised primary process, the Iowa Straw Poll's importance, the various functions of the campaign itself, and the amount of money necessary to mount a viable campaign.

Positioning the Candidate

A critical component of a presidential campaign is the positioning the candidate will use to win the contest. In a race in which there are many qualified candidates and general philosophical agreement, distinguishing yourself is very important to gaining support and eventual success.

While most people do not compare them, certainly Sarah Palin and Barack Obama established a strong position inside their parties in the years leading up to the nomination contest (obviously, we are still waiting to see what choice Palin will make). They had clear personas inside their parties, with both sharing one key characteristic: they were viewed as new, fresh, and unscarred by years on the political battlefield (which isn't to say either was without any blemish).

There are a two predominant fault lines on which candidates in both parties can position themselves: their relationship to Washington and on ideology. There is also the long tradition of the Republican Party to coronate the most recently vanquished

prince. All of these are factors in how candidates will approach the race.

Populists vs. the Establishment - The Coronation Factor in the GOP

In both parties, there are times when the establishment is dominant and others when the populists hold sway. Clearly the GOP is in the midst of this with the ascendancy of the Tea Party movement. In US politics, these movements have taken over each party at various times. And in many cases, the individuals who support and lead these efforts ultimately become the establishment as they displace those who came before. Being an anti-establishment candidate has met with success. Certainly this was the case for Ronald Reagan. And Hillary Clinton was certainly the representative of the establishment for the Democrats in 2008, but she failed to overcome Barack Obama in the most protracted primary battle either party has held in decades.

But at the end of this path are many tombstones. Howard Dean in 2004, Gary Hart in 1984, John McCain in 2000. All defeated by candidates with solid establishment backing. Currently, for the GOP nomination, being positioned outside the Washington DC wing of the party is the best place to be. Normally, there would be many Senators and some members of Congress preparing to contest the nomination. But today there are just two, Senator John Thune and Congressman Mike Pence. Indeed, almost every other candidate has experience as the governor of a state.

The Rules Governing the Primary Process

Both parties award delegates in a series of state contests that traditionally begins with the Iowa Caucus early in the year of a presidential election. While nearly all of the Republican delegates are awarded this way, the Democrats have a large group of "super delegates" as well as delegates who are elected in each state. The super delegates are elected officials and other leaders who are made delegates based on the positions they hold. A smaller group of super delegates are appointed by the Democratic

State Parties. Super delegates have traditionally not been in a numerical position to impact the selection of the Democratic nominee. In 2008, there was a great deal of debate in the Democratic Party about whether super delegates should endorse the decisions made by the voters in the state elections or whether they should exercise their own judgment when voting on the party's nominee for president. This debate will be renewed if there is ever a contested Democratic convention.

In 2012, it is likely that the Democrats will not have a seriously contested nomination. The Republicans will, and their process may change based on recently adopted RNC rules. These rules were adopted to delay the start of voting from early January to February and to lengthen the nomination contest so that more states can participate.

The RNC has carved out a window for four states to hold the first contests for the nomination. Those states are Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Nevada. These four states were also the first states in 2008 and under the new rules they will hold their contests in February 2012. Traditionally, Iowa holds the first contest, the Iowa caucus, and New Hampshire holds the first primary 8 days later (Iowa is on a Monday evening, New Hampshire on the following Tuesday).

Of course, in 2008, the eight-day window was upended by a crush of states moving their primary dates forward. South Carolina and Nevada held their elections on the same day, January 18th. But in 2012, if the RNC rules are adhered to, these four states will hold the first contests with a week or so between each of them. The other significant change is that any state that holds its nomination election in March will have to award its delegates proportionally, rather than the winner-take-all award that is the tradition for the GOP. Again, the hope of the RNC is to allow more states to participate by slowing delegate accumulation. After April 1, states may award delegates as they see fit. This effort may fail, and the 2012 contest could still look very much like it did in 2008: a crush of states in January and early Feb-

ruary that essentially decided the nomination. There are real hurdles to achieving this goal. First, many states currently have their primary dates set by statute and their legislatures and governors will need to act to move their dates back to March or April. Second, there are likely to be states that want to be at the front of the line and will not abide by RNC rules. The penalty for violating the rules is that the state will lose half of its delegates to the convention. But the nominee of the party has always found a way to get the entire delegation seated. And as long as the nomination is not contested on the floor of the Republican Convention, it is hard to see this as anything but a toothless punishment.

If any state breaks into the February window, each of the four early states will move to January with or without RNC permission. So, it is far from clear at this point what the calendar will bring. All that is clear is that Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Nevada will protect their status and move at will to a date that suits their needs. What is also clear, if history is any guide, is that either the winner of Iowa or the winner of New Hampshire will become the nominee of the Republican Party. But history is only a guide, and it may not apply to 2012 given other changes that are being proposed to the awarding of delegates, which will likely lengthen the nomination fight. Regardless, it seems nearly impossible to be the nominee without winning Iowa or New Hampshire.

The Early States - Iowa

Iowa has a rich political tradition with its caucus process. The state's citizens have gathered to discuss political issues and candidates in the caucus format since the early 1800s. Iowans are fiercely proud and protective of their role in choosing a national presidential candidate. They are well educated on national issues and expect candidates to come to Iowa and address these issues on a consistent and personal basis. The Iowa caucuses are democracy in action, often compared to town meetings in their political informality. Caucuses are not new to Iowa. Some form of caucus has existed

since the early 1800s, even before Iowa became a state in 1846. The shapers of the Iowa constitution chose caucuses rather than a primary to nominate candidates, preferring the grassroots approach. Since that time, caucuses have been held in Iowa on a regular basis, normally every two years. But when it comes to nominations for office, the caucuses today only matter in presidential contests. The GOP and Democrats both hold caucuses, but the Republican caucus is a simple presidential preference poll; it has no impact on delegate selection. In the case of the Democratic Party, delegates are selected at their caucus. Caucuses start in Iowa at 7:00 p.m. Because it is already 8:00 p.m. on the East Coast, party leaders have opted to conduct the presidential preference polling early in the caucuses to accommodate the national radio and television networks who are trying to get results on the air during primetime. On caucus night, Iowans gather by party preference (anyone can participate in either party caucus by registering in that party at the beginning of the caucus) in designated schools, public buildings, or often even in private homes to elect delegates to the 99 county conventions. Presidential preference selection on the Republican side is done with a straw vote of those attending the caucuses. The results are not binding on the elected delegates. Typically the delegates to the national convention from Iowa are selected long after the nominee of the party is identified.

The Democrats take a similar preference poll at the beginning of their caucuses. But if a candidate does not receive at least 15% of the votes of the caucus participants, that candidate is excluded from a second preference vote. This aspect of their rules sometimes causes Democratic campaigns to form informal alliances in the days leading up to the caucuses – and much speculation about supposed alliances between campaigns. Additionally, delegate selection is based on the percentage of votes that candidates receive on the final presidential preference vote. Anyone who is old enough to vote in the November general election and is a member of the party is eligible, but traditionally only a small number of Iowans show up. In

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2008, the Iowa GOP estimated that 120,000 people took part in the Republican caucuses. Almost 240,000 people voted in the Democratic caucus.

Iowa Straw Poll

The Iowa Straw Poll is a Republican event that is a non-binding poll that takes place in Ames, Iowa, on a Saturday in August of years in which there is not an incumbent Republican president running for re-election. Though several different local pre-Iowa Caucus straw polls take place in Iowa, the Ames Straw Poll is by far the most prominent, because it draws voters from all over the state rather than just the local area (Ames is near the geographic centre of Iowa, making travel there more convenient), and is thus also commonly known as the Iowa Straw Poll. The Republican Party of Iowa sponsors it. The Iowa Straw Poll was first held in 1979.

The event lasts much of the day and features entertainment and other diversions generally provided by the competing candidates. Before the vote, each candidate is given a chance to make a short speech to the attendees. Non-Republicans are allowed to vote in the Straw Poll. However, all voters must be 18 years of age, be legal residents of the state of Iowa, and purchase a ticket to the event (or have one provided by a campaign). Voters have their hands stamped or their thumbs dipped in ink when entering the voting area so that they cannot vote twice. Ballots are put into electronic voting machines.

The Iowa Straw Poll's results are non-binding and have no official effect on the presidential primaries. However, the straw

poll is frequently seen as a first test of organizational strength in Iowa by the news media and party insiders. As such, it can become very beneficial for the winning candidate on the national level because it builds momentum for their campaign, enhances their aura of inevitability, and shows off a superior field operation. Since its founding, the winner of the Iowa Straw Poll has gone

on to win the Republican presidential nomination two out of five times. Three out of five winners (including one of the winners of the 1995 tie); have gone on to win the Iowa Caucus. The straw poll impacts the shape of the race, which makes its place in the process unique. There are many examples of candidates who perform poorly or fail to meet expectation exiting the race. This has included Dan Quayle, Elizabeth Dole and Sam Brownback. On a more local level, the Iowa Straw Poll gives a major boost to the local economy. Thousands of people, including journalists, campaign staffers, and voters, arrive in town around the time of the poll. The Iowa Straw Poll is one of the Iowa Republican Party's most lucrative fundraising events.

New Hampshire

The New Hampshire primary is the first in a series of nationwide political party primary elections held in the United States every four years. Although only a few delegates are chosen in the New Hampshire primary, its real importance comes from the massive media coverage given New Hampshire and Iowa; in recent years the two states received about as much media attention as all other state primaries combined. An example of this massive media coverage has been seen on the campus of Saint Anselm College, as the college has held multiple national debates and has attracted media outlets like Fox News, CNN, NBC, and ABC.

New Hampshire is considered an independent state that votes both Democrat and Republican and therefore has been considered a good gauge of the nation's feelings. Its population is 96% white. But voter preferences in New Hampshire often seem to track with national sentiment about the candidates. In 1992 the neighbour-state Senator, Paul Tsongas of Massachusetts, defeated southerner Bill Clinton 33.2% to 24.8%, but Clinton's strong showing surprised most and gave him the momentum to win and the nickname, "The Comeback Kid". The New Hampshire Primary gives a candidate with little money and low name recognition a legitimate shot at gaining the nomination. It is a small state that demands

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personal contact. History says you have to win in Iowa or New Hampshire to be in position to gain the nomination.

The transcript from the September 5, 2007 Fox News Debate in Durham NH at UNH sums up what it means to campaign in the NH Primary: Brit Hume opened up by introducing the candidates and noting that Fred Thompson was not there. He chose to not participate in this debate and was planning to announce his candidacy for President the following day.

ARIZONA SEN. JOHN MCCAIN: Well, I think that's a decision that Fred should make. Maybe we're up past his bed time, but the point is...

(LAUGHTER)

You know, one thing I know about New Hampshire, and I know well, is that the people of New Hampshire expect to see you. They expect to see you a lot. And they expect to see you at townhall meetings and at places all over this great state of New Hampshire, and they expect to examine you before they make up their mind.

One of the many Arizonans who ran for president of the United States, unsuccessfully, like all of us...

(LAUGHTER)

Maurice Udall, once - he was a very funny man, as you know - once he said, a fellow in Manchester said to the other one, "what do you think about Mo Udall for president?" And the guy said, "I don't know; I only met him twice." And you know, the reason why that joke is funny is because it's true.

The New Hampshire Primary has a proud history that goes back to 1916. At that time, voters were selecting delegates to the national conventions. In 1949, legislation was passed allowing candidate names to be added to the ballot along with the delegates. In 1952, 43% of New Hampshire voters cast their votes in the states first true primary. In 1977, delegate names

were entirely removed from the ballot and a law that sought to insure the states position as hosting the first primary in the country was enacted. It has been the first primary in the nation since the passage of this law. This also represents the first time when voters were given a direct voice in their parties' presidential candidate, unlike the caucuses.

Many Granite Staters credit Secretary of State Bill Gardner with protecting their coveted First-in-the-Nation status. Bill Gardner was elected Secretary of the State by the Legislature in 1976 and has been there ever since. The New Hampshire primary is not a closed primary, in which only people registered with that party can cast votes in a party primary. Unlike most other states, New Hampshire permits voters that have not declared their party affiliation to vote in a party's primary. A voter does have to officially join one party or the other before voting; however, the voter can change his or her affiliation back to "Undeclared" immediately after voting, and hence he or she only has to belong to a party for the few minutes it takes to fill out and cast a ballot. Voters who are already a member of one party or the other cannot change their affiliation at the polling place: that can only be done before the checklist is closed several weeks prior to the election. New voters can, however, register at the polling place. All voting is done with paper ballots; however, most of the paper ballots are counted by machine.

South Carolina

The South Carolina presidential primary has become one of several key early state nominating contests in the process of choosing presidential nominees. The South Carolina primary has been historically more important for the Republican Party, being considered a "firewall" to protect front-runners in the presidential nomination race.

It was designed to stop the momentum of insurgency candidates who could have gotten a boost from strong showings in Iowa and New Hampshire. From its inception in 1980 through the election of 2008, the winner of the South Carolina Republican presi-

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dential primary has gone on to win the nomination. The origin of South Carolina as a force in Republican presidential politics can be traced back to the political consultant, Lee Atwater. In 1980, Mr. Atwater helped get the South Carolina primary scheduled early in the campaign season to help Ronald Reagan. The Democratic Party also conducts a very critical primary in South Carolina. The timing of the South Carolina primary has been critical to its influence. Scheduled as the first primary in the South and conducted a few days before Super Tuesday, candidates have seen the state as a springboard to subsequent primary tests. The South Carolina primary is open. South Carolina does not have registration by party. Registered voters may vote in either party's primary, but not both. The Republican and Democratic parties of South Carolina administer their respective primaries. State or local election officials do not conduct it.

The Bottom Line on Early States and the Primary Campaign

No campaign goes from peak to peak in any campaign. And with so many elections to win in order to gain the presidential nomination, it is especially true of the primary season. One only need consider the Obama campaign's Iowa victory, soon followed by defeat in New Hampshire, to know the truth of the election season.

But it is true that success begets success. Winning in Iowa or New Hampshire is critical to actually winning the nomination. The momentum it begets is real and results in massive news coverage and the financial support necessary to compete in the bulk of states that come later. No campaign – not even the Obama campaign in 2008 – can raise enough money to adequately campaign in the multiple primaries that come after the early states. The early victories provide critical news media coverage that helps successful campaigns get their message out in states where they cannot adequately advertise. In this case, the winners are the haves and the losers are the have-nots. And if you are a have-not, it is extraordinarily difficult to reverse course.

Structure: How to organize a Campaign

A presidential campaign must be structured to maximize efficiencies and minimize the shortcomings of the campaign. It must streamline decision making by have competent leadership and without too many cooks in the kitchen. It should be cost efficient and empower local leadership to act. Above all, it should reflect the candidate who is leading the campaign. Structurally, the campaign will have a number of key divisions: Management, Finance, Communications, Political, Research, Policy, the E-Campaign and Administration. In addition, the early states will have their own campaign operations. So, campaign offices will be established in Iowa, New Hampshire, South Carolina and Nevada. These offices will have individuals in charge of Management, Political, Communications, and Advance/Event Planning. As 2012 approaches, the campaign will consider other states as it gets closer to 2012, but diverting financial resources to those states is generally not advised if it means taking resources from the four states named above.

Decision-making Inside the Campaign

Every campaign should have an oversight body of trusted advisors and confidants to the candidate. First, it has the benefit of providing the candidate with a source of advice and guidance that comes from outside the campaign. Secondly, it gives the campaign manager the tools he or she needs to make sure the campaign is doing its best job. This group can review the plans and efforts of individual decisions and be used as a body to get the best out of the team.

The board of directors should be comprised of key senior advisors, the campaign Chairman and Finance chairman, Treasurer, trusted friends, and the campaign manager. The purpose of the group is to broadly set direction, budgets, goals and strategy. It reports to the candidate, and the candidate serves as the final decision maker on important issue. It should meet regularly, and should have a chairman. Day to day operations of the campaign should be decided by the campaign manager in consultation with

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appropriate people inside the campaign. The manager should be given latitude on implementing the approved budget and plan. But he should be held accountable to the campaign Chairman and the board of directors

The candidate will focus on raising money and communicating the campaign's message. Even in a presidential campaign, the candidate is the chief communicator and fundraiser and the campaigns success in these areas will depend on the candidate.

The candidate's time is the most precious resource the campaign has and that time needs to be focused on the areas that will make the most difference.

Key Campaign Personnel: Campaign Manager

The campaign manager is typically a professional with significant campaign management experience. Ideally, this person would have experience in a national campaign or national party committee. If not, they should have run a competitive statewide campaign and demonstrated the capacity to manage all functions of a campaign well. This person must be a steady leader, able work constructively with others, foster open communication but be able to make decisions. Management of budget and people is a key pre-requisite.

Strategy Director

This person should be an experienced campaign operative or consultant who has a background in directing polling or paid television advertising for a significant campaign. This person will coordinate the paid message campaign, disperse messaging throughout the campaign, and maintain a long and short-term message calendar for the campaign.

Policy Director

This person should have policy experience either in the White House or with a member of the party Leadership in the House or Senate. Broad understanding of policy is

critical, specific understanding of issues in Iowa and New Hampshire would be ideal. This person should be able to construct an outside team of advisors who will dedicate their time to helping develop the policies of the candidate. This person will also be responsible for the opposition research functions of the campaign.

Communications Director

This person should demonstrate the ability to construct a press narrative for a candidate, an understanding of the various channels of message distribution, and the ability to manage a team. They will need deep relationships with the press. They should be able to manage their staff well, and make sure that the people in charge of message delivery are doing so in a coordinated and effective manner.

New Media Director

This person should be an online strategist who understands the power of the Internet to communicate with voters. They should be able to work effectively across campaign divisions, as they will be key to the success of finance, political and communications.

Political Director

This should be a seasoned professional who understands the contours of the political landscape, understands field organization, voter contact and GOTV, and has proven successful at it in the 2010 cycle. An ideal candidate would be a manager or deputy manager of a large statewide race or a regional political director for a party committee. Ability to manage staff and effectively communicate the goals of the campaign and measure progress toward them will be key as they will be the main manager of the early state effort.

Pollster

The pollster should have broad national experience, know the record of the candidate, and have an ability to use the survey research to help set the strategic course of the campaign. Experience in the early states

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is a plus. Most candidates will have a pollster that they have worked with in their other campaigns.

Media Consultant

More money will be spent on advertising than any other aspect of the campaign. More importantly, most voters will form their impressions about the candidate through the advertising-campaign. Most candidates will have a consultant they have worked with in their other campaigns.

Press Secretary

This should be a person who knows you, your record, has topflight relationships with national media, and who is cool under pressure. He/She should be able to speak for the campaign on TV and in print, and have demonstrated good judgment.

Direct Mail/Phone Consultants

Often overlooked in their importance, the consultants hired to run these two efforts are often critical to success. The ability to target voters by issue area and candidate support are important aspects of the US campaign, and in a primary effort all the more important as expensive television advertising is often wasted on people who will not actually vote in the nomination contest.

Iowa/New Hampshire Campaign Manager

Both of these positions will be key to the campaign's success. The ideal manager has run a statewide race and won, has positive relationships with the party structure and key coalition groups and has a demonstrated ability to manage a campaign.

A specific focus on grassroots mobilization is important for these staffers, as the primary job of the state campaign managers is to run an effective political operation (the strategic decisions, advertising, communications and new media campaigns will largely be run by the headquarters staff in consultation with state operations).

Campaign Functions

The campaign will have eight divisions with central importance to winning the campaign: Management, Finance, Strategy, Political, Communications, the E-campaign, Policy and Research. Also central to the effort will be the campaign headquarters in the early states.

Management

This division is responsible for the day-to-day management of the campaign, adhering to the budget, coordinating the various division of the campaign, determining the strategy of the campaign, working with consultants, and communicating with the candidate and the board of directors.

Finance

They will be responsible for meeting the financial goals of the campaign through major donor solicitation, direct mail, phones and events. This division will coordinate with the Finance Chairman and Co-Chairmen of the campaign so that the campaign's goals can be met. Will provide regular updates to the management division regarding progress towards the goals of the campaign.

Strategy

The Strategy Division will direct survey research, message development, television and radio advertising and voter targeting. It will coordinate with the polling and media consultants. It will provide regular review of the messaging the other divisions are using. This division will construct and update the message calendar of the campaign, combining the paid messaging with earned media efforts and candidate events as well as longer term message targets in the upcoming months of the campaign.

This division will be responsible for engaging supporters so they can effectively turnout the vote and persuade voters to support the candidate. It will oversee the early state campaign HQ, provide volunteers with tools to engage voters, keep accurate records of

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supporters and potential supporters; conduct the paid direct mail and phone efforts. It will make regular reports of the progress made to the management division.

Communications

This division will be responsible for national and regional media outlets as well as blogs and other online news drivers. It will coordinate surrogate supporters for talk radio and cable news shows. They will maintain a long range and short-term calendar or activities, and in coordination with Political, devise events to promote the messaging of the campaign.

E-campaign

The E-campaign will be engaged in almost all aspects of the campaign: organizing supporters on-line, raising money, supporting communications, providing tools to segment and target lists. They will also provide internal tools, such as a campaign intranet to store internal information for easy access across the campaign.

Policy/Research

The policy department is critical to developing a solid and thoughtful foundation for the policies that the candidate will propose. It will also be responsible for analyzing the proposals made by other candidates, the incumbent administration and in the Congress. Finally, it will conduct research on the records and histories of the candidate as well as other candidates in the race. It will insure that the campaigns proposals are in line with previous positions held by the candidate, as well as performing this same function when reviewing the proposals of other candidates.

Early State Headquarters

The early state headquarters will be comprised of the following staff: a campaign manager, a political director who will direct coalitions and field staff, a press secretary, and an e-campaign support team. They will be primarily responsible for organizing voters, tracking the voter universe's support

for the candidate along a five points scale (hard supporter of another candidate =

0 to hard support for our candidate =5) and communication progress toward the vote goal to national headquarters. They will also organize events and conduct press activities.

Conclusion

The success of any campaign is often a combination of hard work and luck. Certainly a presidential campaign entails any number of pitfalls. The multi-candidate primary field in presidential nominations offers a challenge that is generally unique in US politics. While multi-candidate primaries are common, to have one that is full of successful candidates for other high offices is not. This component adds a level of geometry to the campaign that presents its own set of challenges. Oftentimes presidential campaigns are beset by internal problems. The campaigns are larger than any other you could attempt, and so are the stakes. While this paper lists a number of positions, ambitious and successful people fill them. Internal strife is a more common element to these campaigns than not. The 2008 Clinton and McCain campaigns are just the most recent examples, while the calmer internal politics of the Obama campaign in 2008 and the Bush campaign in 2000 and 2004 are probably closer to exceptions than to the rule. From the candidate's perspective, they are often at the heads of campaigns with a team of campaigners who probably have not worked together in the type of stressful environment that is a modern presidential campaign. Again, this adds a level of complexity to the campaign. To win the contest, a presidential candidate will endure an extraordinarily high level of scrutiny. I call this process "vetting". The candidate will first be subjected to opposition research by other campaigns. Any policy inconsistency, poor personnel decisions, poor policy choices or implementation or scandal will be researched and catalogued. Video clips will be gathered and compared. Every utterance ever reported will be collected. And the campaigns will analyze this, package it, and deliver it up to news reporters. They will

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report it and analyze it. The news media will do its own research, which will add to further illuminate the candidate to the voters.

Certainly, the 24/7 nature of the news media was created to be fed this kind of information. But the US voter, for as much as they will be tired of and done with the campaign by November 6, 2012, will in some strange way be done a service by the long process. The news stories, the ads, the campaign back and forth, and the moments both sublime and debased, will inform the voters, even if it doesn't seem all that elevating to them. The candidate will have succeeded in numerous elections, undergone microscopic examination, and endured a long, stressful and grueling campaign. So will his or her team. So will the voters. But the candidate will also have demonstrated some capacity to endure and may be up to the task of a tougher job, being the President of the United States.

Terry Nelson, Partner of FP1 Strategies

Terry Nelson has consistently demonstrated high levels of success in both the strategic and tactical areas of campaigns. He has played a senior role in the last three national elections and dozens of campaigns around the country. Frequently sought out for his opinions by the national news media, Nelson was named one of "Politics Fabulous Fifty" -- a listing of the fifty most influential political operatives in Washington. This background provides him with a unique, effective approach to achieving goals, seizing opportunities and solving problems for his clients in the public policy and political arena. He is currently senior advisor to Governor Tim Pawlenty and to the National Republican Congressional Committee. In 2005, Nelson served as the National Political Director for Bush-Cheney 2004, where he was responsible for the grassroots effort, turning out the vote, coalition outreach, and aid voter contact mail and phones. This effort produced the largest number of votes for a candidate for president in US history.

Prior to his role in the Bush-Cheney reelection campaign he was the Deputy Chief of Staff and Executive Director of Political Op-

erations at the Republican National Committee (RNC). While there, he helped craft the historic takeover of U.S. Senate and gains in the U.S. House in 2002 and was responsible for television, voter contact mail and phones and get-out-the-vote programs.

He also served as Political Director of the National Republican Congressional Committee (NRCC) in 2000. In this role he directed a \$55 million political program to retain the Republican majority in the House when many political analysts and media pundits predicted a return to the minority. Nelson graduated from the University of Iowa. He lives in Falls Church, Virginia with his wife, Marci, and their three children.