

## Winning Edge #1 – How to ask for a donation

Money alone doesn't win elections (just ask Michael Bloomberg about his presidential campaign). But great fundraising does make it easier to win.



One of the biggest challenges a candidate faces when they run for office is asking for money. It makes candidates uncomfortable, and most people are not born naturally good at fundraising. The good news is fundraising is just a skill that anyone can learn and master.

That's why on this first episode of the **Winning Edge**, we're focused on fundraising. We want to show candidates and people considering running how to fundraise, so they have the money needed to win.

To start, let's look at how you do you ask for money?

When a candidate asks someone for money, they need to think about it from the donor's perspective. And a donor typically has three questions they want answered.

1. Who are you?
2. Why are you running?
3. How are you different?

If a candidate has a fundraising pitch that answers these three questions well, they set themselves up to win and to get that donation.

To help answer these questions, we've created a 4-part fundraising pitch to make it easy to ask and easy for the donor to say, "Yes."

### **The first question: Who are you?**

As a candidate, you want to give the donors a little background about yourself if they don't already know you. It's just a fact that donors give more to people they know and trust and people who share their values.

For example, a candidate running for school board could say:

*"I'm a mom with three kids under 10 and work full-time as a nurse, and I never expected to be running for school board."*

### **Second question: Why are you running?**

It's amazing how hard it is for candidates to answer this question. The reason is the answer isn't a simple soundbite. There are usually several reasons why a candidate is running. One way to answer the why are you running question is with this formula:

Why I'm Running = [State the Problem] + [The Status Quo] + [Your Solution]

A candidate can have one sentence for each part of this question. To continue our example of the school board candidate, they could say:

*[Problem] But the problem with our school board is that parents like us don't have a voice.*

*[Status Quo] The board today is about indoctrination, not education.*

*[Your Solution] I'm running to turn around the school board and refocus our schools on what they should do – educate our kids.*

It's just that simple. A three-sentence answer for why you're running.

### **The third question: How are you different?**

Political donors hear from many candidates during each election cycle. If a candidate has a plan, they stand out.

The plan doesn't need to be complicated. It can just be a simple promise of one thing the candidate will do when elected and a principle that will guide them as they make decisions.

*Here's my promise, when I'm elected, I will first [insert one thing you'll do].*

*Second, on every vote and decision, I will ask, "Does this put kids and parents first?" I'm voting no and will fight to stop it if it doesn't.*

Finally, the donor has the answer for The Who, the Why, and the How. And it's time to make the ask.

## **The Ask**

Always ask for the max amount or a range. Candidates don't know how much money a donor has or how much the donor wants to see them win. If there are no contribution limits, ask for a range and let the donor decide.

*"I'm stepping up to run because we need a change, but I can't do this alone. I'm asking 15 families to partner with me with a campaign donation between 1,000 dollars to more than 10,000 dollars.*

*"Will you be one of the 15 donors who make this happen?"*

Then after the ask, pause and wait for the donor to respond.

That's it. To ask for money, you just need a simple 90-second script. Make it your own words, but you can keep it simple and give it often.

Now you have a script, on the next **Winning Edge**, we will look at who to ask.