

Breaking a Wave

In 1950, two French hydraulic engineers tried to do the impossible: stop the sea. Specifically, they were trying to stop giant waves from destroying breakwaters and coves.

In the past, the solution was to build higher, bigger breakwaters. But in post-war France, there weren't enough resources to build bigger and higher. They had to find another way. Then they had an idea: what if you didn't need to stop the wave but instead just break it up?

Through trial and error, they created what is now known as the tetrapod, a four-armed concrete structure that resembled a large child's toy jacks. The beauty of the design was that it didn't matter what angle the wave hit from or how hard it hit—the tetrapod would break up the force and disperse it in all directions. When the tetrapods were placed together, they would not move.

After its success in several storms, the tetrapod was rapidly adopted worldwide to protect coastlines from storms and massive waves.



In a campaign, there is always a storm. It may be a wave of voters that dampens turnout, a flood of negative ads that threatens your base, a deluge of outside money that forces you to raise more, or an interview packed with tough questions meant to sink your campaign. Sometimes it's simply the constant fight to hold voters' attention in a short-attention-span world.

Often in these situations, candidates act like the old seawalls. They double down on whichever area they're most comfortable with—doors, fundraising, or events—and just do more of it to withstand the storm.

Instead, prepare for the inevitable storm by building your own tetrapod of skills. Focus on developing four arms to break up the wave.

Your Stump Speech

Build a stump speech that clearly says why you are running.

Your Answers to Tough Question

Cultivate the ability to answer tough questions thrown at you about the big issues in your state and district.



Your Stories

Create short, memorable stories that make voters remember you and want to vote for you.

Your Fundraising

Build a strong fundraising system with consistent weekly fundraising calls.

Take Action to Break the Wave

Think about where your campaign is right now. Which arm of your tetrapod will you work on this week?

Will you...

Practice Your Stump Speech

- Polish your stump speech so you can deliver it conversationally with no notes.

Need Help? Check out Winning Edge:

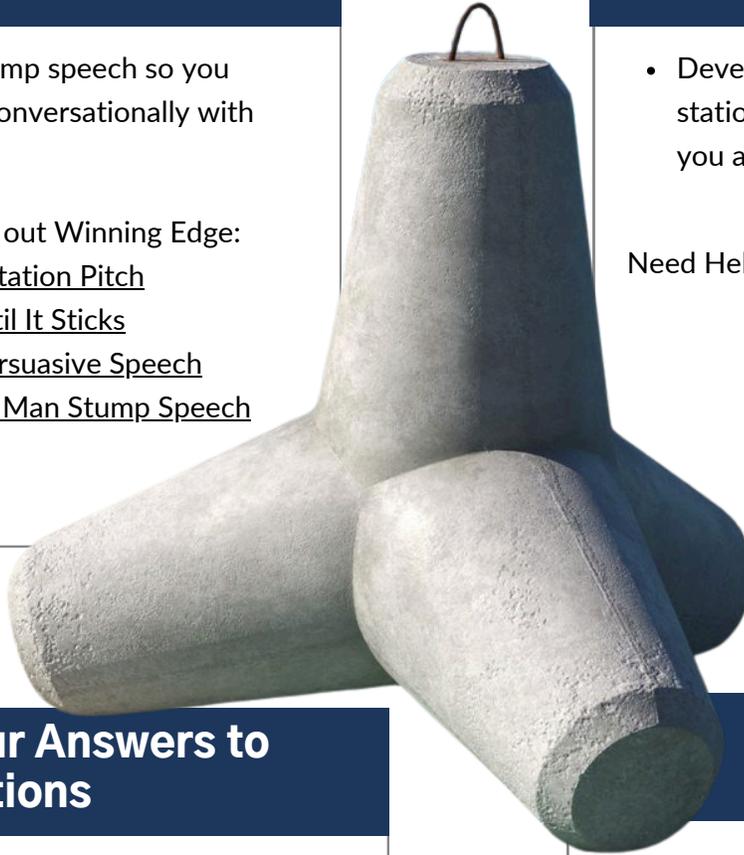
- [#68- The Gas Station Pitch](#)
- [#57 - Say It Until It Sticks](#)
- [#48 - 5-Part Persuasive Speech](#)
- [#31 - The Lego Man Stump Speech](#)

Create Your Stories

- Develop a few stories and your gas station pitch so voters remember you after a brief interaction.

Need Help? Check out Winning Edge:

- [#64 - Start a Story People Want to Hear](#)
- [#50 - Tell the Second Story](#)
- [#22 - Creating Your Character Story](#)



Practice Your Answers to Tough Questions

- Practice answering the tough questions.
- Clarify how you talk about your positions on difficult issues.

Need Help? Check out Winning Edge:

- [#24 - Answering Tough Questions](#)
- [#25 - Mastering Unscripted Answers](#)

Make Your Fundraising Calls

- Push off the fear and start making ten fundraising calls a week.
- Start with your previous donors, then friends and family, and known political donors.

Need Help? Check out Winning Edge:

- [#20 - Overcoming Fundraising Fear: The Ladder Approach](#)
- [#66 - Create a Fundraising System, Not a Goal](#)
- [#46 - 10 Call Rule](#)
- [#18 - Start Your Campaign Fundraising](#)

The Bottom Line

You can't control the storms in a campaign. But you can control how the waves break by preparing your speeches, stories, answers, and fundraising.