

## THINGS A WOMAN SHOULD DO BEFORE RUNNING FOR OFFICE

A first time candidate must have a story that is an attractive and compelling way to introduce herself to the public. The story the public expects to hear will have several narrative threads: roots in the community you seek to represent, ways that you have served the community or participated in public life, public problems you have been part of solving, why you are running for this office. These things will help you prepare that story.

### 1. ORGANIZE A PETITION CAMPAIGN

You will master the political and legal aspects of a particular issue, learn to make a simple and coherent argument to others, compile lists that can be used later, meet and work with others who care about the same issue(s) as you.

### 2. JOIN A MALE-DOMINATED CIVIC ORGANIZATION

This is a great opportunity to start building a base of male support – essential for a woman candidate -- by demonstrating your commitment to service and community events that these men find important. Most of these clubs (Rotary, Optimist, etc.) also have state and national memberships you can tap into when the time comes.

### 3. BUILD NEIGHBORHOOD RELATIONSHIPS

Your base of support should be strong in the place where you live, raise your children, pay taxes, maintain your property, and help others. Why should strangers vote for you if you aren't even a good neighbor?

### 4. SERVE ON A BOARD OR COUNCIL FOR THE ARTS

You will gain a reputation for supporting talent and beauty in your local area, and all the while you will be meeting and working with fellow citizens who volunteer and donate money – exactly the kind of people you want to know when you run for office.

### 5. JOIN OR START A BOOK CLUB

Book clubs are hot these days, and most of them are predominantly female, which gives you a chance to build a base among other women. You will meet other women who are committed enough to come to meetings, do their homework, and talk about all the things that matter to them. If you can't find a local book club to join, start one!

### 6. SERVE AS AN OFFICER IN THE CLUBS YOU JOIN

### 7. JOIN A CHURCH, OR HAVE A RESPECTFUL REASON FOR WHY YOU DON'T GO TO CHURCH.

### 8. PAY YOUR DUES

In other words, be active before you run, or you will lack credibility with those who really are engaged in that arena.

### 9. GET ACTIVE IN YOUR POLITICAL PARTY

Help others get elected, donate your time and money, serve on organizing and fundraising committees. Let your check, no matter how small, be the first one that arrives when local candidates in your party request donations. Think seriously about serving as local party officer, because you will meet people you need to know and you will learn election law and how to communicate and work with party structures above the local level.

### 10. MASTER AN ISSUE AND/OR SOLVE A PUBLIC PROBLEM

This will give you substance and credibility in at least one area where you can describe your knowledge, experience, and success in terms of its importance to the public.