



40 Questions to Ask BEFORE Hiring a Campaign Manager or Consultant

The following list of questions you should ask a prospective campaign manager or consultant was put together by Joe Napolitan and first published in the July 2001 issue of Campaigns & Elections magazine.

They're as valid today as they were back then...

1. How long have you been in business?
2. How large is your staff?
3. What campaigns have you worked on?
4. What was your specific role in those campaigns?
5. Do you belong to any professional associations, such as AAPC or IAPC?
6. What do you do best in a campaign?
7. Do you work for both Democrats and Republicans, or stick to one party?
8. How do you communicate your recommendations to the campaign?
9. What was your work experience before becoming a consultant?
10. Are you a specialist in reaching any particular demographic group of voters?
11. How much do you know about this state/region?
12. Have you ever done campaigns in this state?
13. When and for whom?
14. Can we have the names of four or five clients you have worked for that we can contact as references? (Note: It's critical to contact these references.)

15. What is your fee structure? Flat fee or do you work on a commission basis?
16. How much time are you personally prepared to devote to this campaign?
17. Would you mainly do the work yourself or would most of the work be done by others on your staff? If so, who are they and what is their background?
18. What other campaigns are you working this year?
19. Have you won any awards for your political work?
20. Have you written any books, papers or articles that we can read?
21. Do you work only in the United States or in other countries as well?
22. Do you have any personal contacts with groups whose support we might get?
23. Have you ever been fired from a campaign? If so, why?
24. Have you ever quit a campaign? If so, why?
25. Have you ever been sued because of your political work?
26. Is there anything in your background that might harm the candidate or this campaign?
27. Are you available on weekends for telephone calls or occasional meetings?
28. What other consultants have you worked with in campaigns?
29. How much control do you expect to have in a campaign and in which areas?
30. Do you have a standard contract form? May we see it?
- 31. Have you ever run for office yourself?**
32. Have you ever held any staff positions in government?
33. Have you ever held any party offices?
34. How would you describe an ideal working relationship with a candidate?
35. What are the keys to organizing and conducting a winning campaign?
36. Do you give news media interviews on campaigns you are working on?
37. What kind of news media contacts do you have?
38. How long before the election do you like to become involved in the campaign?
39. Can you work with a candidate you don't like?
40. Can you work with a candidate whose ideas you don't agree with?

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* *Psephology (see-follow-gee): The study of campaigns and elections*

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