

# Know Your Opponents

**It is important to know the strengths and weaknesses of your electoral opponents.**

Be aware of their positions on the concerns of voters, particularly where your opponent differs and agrees with your beliefs and values.

## **Useful information**

- Who are your opponents?
- What are their backgrounds?
- Describe their education.
- Describe their previous jobs.
- Describe their previous elected, appointed, or public positions.
- What are their voting records?
- What previous public statements or important votes have they made?
- Why are they running for office?
- What do they hope to accomplish in office?
- What issues are personally important to them?

Gather information about other candidates from media reports, public meetings, materials published by candidates, and their social media accounts.

Make sure a member of your campaign team or a supporter attends each public event, asks questions, and reports back to you or your campaign manager about what the other candidates had to say.

Do not go to any public meetings or debates without as many supporters as you can muster. The supporter's role is two-fold: to ask difficult and challenging questions of your competition, and to ask you questions that give you an opportunity to outline your views and share your message as the winning candidate.

There may be few ideological differences between candidates. This can often be the case in party nominations when it is even more important to clearly formulate what makes you a different and viable choice for the party membership.

Personally attacking other candidates could damage your reputation.