

Self-Assessment Exercise

Assess yourself on a scale of 1 to 5, with 1 signifying an area for improvement, and 5 an area of personal strengths. Re-evaluate yourself every couple of years to see how you are doing!

Patience Level

1 2 3 4 5

Reporters and constituents may ask you inappropriate questions. You may be asked the same question many times. Can you remain calm when dealing with people whom you find annoying or frustrating?

Leadership

1 2 3 4 5

Do you like working with people? Do people trust and confide in you? Are you able to listen empathetically to someone else's problems or concerns? Are you able to delegate responsibility effectively? Are you able to openly demonstrate your appreciation for the hard work and loyalty of your supporters? Do you have access to individuals and groups who would work for your campaign?

Public Speaking

1 2 3 4 5

Can you speak easily and comfortably in front of diverse groups and to the media? Are you articulate? Are you able to communicate potentially complex ideas in a way that everyone can understand? Does it take you a long time to practice a speech before you feel comfortable, or do you need only to read it once or twice to ensure you remember the key points? Are you able to handle unanticipated questions effectively?

Stress Management

1 2 3 4 5

Can you set priorities and follow them? Can you deal with the highs and lows during your campaign with a fairly even temperament? How well can you handle competing demands for your time? Are you able to do many different tasks at once, or are you easily overwhelmed by disorganization and confusion?

Stamina and Endurance

1 2 3 4 5

Are you able to work long hours under stressful conditions? Can you pace yourself? Are you able to travel well and schedule your activities so you do not burn out? Are you able to stop and say no before you become completely exhausted? Do you have the physical stamina for door-to-door canvassing during election campaigns?

Impact on Personal Life

1 2 3 4 5

Does your family support the idea of your involvement in politics? Can you modify or take a leave from your work and volunteer commitments? Do you have family and friends who can take over your family commitments during the campaign? Do you have a network of friends you can trust and who can provide moral support? Could you, when necessary, put the needs of your constituents ahead of your own, especially with regards to your time?

Political Know-How

1 2 3 4 5

Do you know how government works? Do you have adequate knowledge and understanding of the issues? Do you know where you stand on these issues? If you are involved in party politics, do you know the stance of your party? Do you know how to engage in the political world, such as when to say what, how much to say, and to whom? Do you know what resources are available to help you become more informed?

Create an inventory of what you will bring to the public arena.

Review it with a trusted confidante, mentor, or friend who can be objective.

What is my agenda?

Being ready to clearly articulate and promote your agenda to voters is key to a successful campaign. Be prepared to aggressively and publicly promote your qualifications.

1. What social changes do I want to see?

2. What have I done to make life better for my fellow citizens?

3. What issues have I tackled in which I have some expertise?

4. What personal accomplishment am I most proud of?

5. What is the greatest goal I would like to accomplish in my lifetime?

6. What do I think my community needs?

7. What issues are important to me? Are representatives in my area doing anything to address these issues?

8. What would I do to address these issues?

Voters will support the candidate who most consistently and clearly articulates their own views, and can sustain voter confidence.

How will running affect my personal life?

What changes might occur in my life? How do they measure up against what I hope to achieve?

Potential Benefits

Potential Drawbacks

Personal

Family

Community

Career

Income

Expenses

Other

What contributes to my political qualifications?

These experiences involve similar skill sets linked to organization, leadership, providing service to the community, working with people, and knowledge of basic political structures.

- community involvement, volunteering, committee work
- previous experience in politics at any level
- professional employment and contacts
- academic preparation at university or college
- volunteering on other candidates' campaigns
- general knowledge of the skills needed to participate effectively within the community and in local government
- name recognition achieved through community involvement, letters to the editor, articles in local papers, etc.
- graduation from candidate campaign schools

The **ultimate requirements**, however, are an awareness of the issues, and a desire to do something about them.

What Motivates Me to Run for Office?

People have very different reasons for entering politics: they may want to improve their communities, recognize skills they have that would help others achieve their goals, or want to create wider societal change.

Whatever your agenda, the public and the media will expect you to be knowledgeable on a variety of issues. They will assess and judge you based on your awareness of, and responses to, the issues affecting your community.



- Are there ways your summary could be strengthened?

Self-Assessment of Leadership Skills

Identify areas for improvement. Ask yourself these questions:

- | | | |
|--|---|---|
| 1. Do I try to be aware of how others think and feel? | Y | N |
| 2. Do I try to help others perform to the best of their abilities? | Y | N |
| 3. Am I willing to accept responsibility? | Y | N |
| 4. Do I accept and appreciate other perspectives and opinions? | Y | N |
| 5. Am I aware of current issues and concerns in my community? | Y | N |
| 6. Am I willing to try new ideas and new ways of doing things? | Y | N |
| 7. Am I able to communicate with others effectively? | Y | N |
| 8. Am I a good problem solver? | Y | N |

Analyze your **strengths and weaknesses**—and take action! Devise a strategy for upgrading your skills.

