

5 Team Members Every Campaign Needs

by JOE GARECHT

One of the most important parts of any campaign organization is the campaign team — those individuals that the candidate relies on to carry the campaign to victory. While all campaigns are different, and thus have different needs when it comes to campaign organization, there are five positions that must be filled on any campaign, no matter how small. Some campaigns may be small enough that one person can serve in two of the positions, but each job must be done and done right. Whether the job is filled by a paid staff member or a volunteer, each of the following job descriptions is integral to the success of your campaign:

1. Campaign Manager

After the candidate, the campaign manager is the most important member of the campaign team. The candidate should never, ever function as the campaign manager, no matter how small the campaign is. The candidate needs to be free to meet the voters and donors and be out on the campaign trail.

The campaign manager is responsible for all aspects of the campaign. The person you choose for this job should have a basic understanding of election strategy, be comfortable delegating, have good organizational skills and be able to work well with the candidate. The campaign manager works in conjunction with the candidate and the entire team to develop the campaign strategy and coordinate all aspects of the organization, from fundraising to paid media to voter contact activities.

2. Volunteer Coordinator

Above all, the person you choose to be the volunteer coordinator must be a people person. Working with volunteers is stressful, and requires diplomacy and patience. The volunteer coordinator is responsible for recruiting, scheduling, and organizing the volunteer team. Because volunteers are not paid and are often unskilled, the coordinator needs to be able to smooth over egos and trouble spots and effectively teach the volunteers new skills. The volunteer coordinator should be comfortable delegating duties to precinct and ward captains, especially in larger election districts.

3. Fundraising Director

The fundraising director is responsible for coordinating all of the fundraising tools at the campaign's disposal to reach the fundraising goal that the team has set on the timetable on which they have set it.

The fundraising director guides the campaign's major donor and direct mail fundraising programs, and oversees [fundraising events](#). In smaller campaigns that cannot afford an accountant or election lawyer, the fundraising director must have a basic knowledge of campaign finance regulations.

4. Finance Chairman

Though they are often confused, the finance chairman fills an entirely different role than the fundraising director. The finance chairman, along with the finance committee, is responsible for bringing in major donor contributions. Generally, the finance chairman contributes a certain amount to the campaign, and pledges to raise a significant amount from other donors. While the finance chairman may be involved in fundraising planning sessions, he or she does not run the fundraising organization — that job is left to the fundraising director, who takes care of the organization and day-to-day details of the fundraising program.

5. Grassroots Coordinator

The grassroots coordinator oversees all of the grassroots activities of the campaign, including coalitions, get out the vote, absentee voter drives, voter registration efforts, and other grassroots activities. In most larger campaigns, these activities are each assigned a staff member of their own, but in local campaigns it is generally sufficient to have one grassroots coordinator who oversees the whole operation, with volunteers filling in as needed. The grassroots coordinator must have superb organizational skills, be knowledgeable about campaign strategy, and be able to take on a lot of responsibility, especially as election day draws near.