

The background of the book cover is a vibrant collage of overlapping handprints in various colors including red, blue, yellow, green, and pink. The hands are rendered in a simple, stylized manner, with some appearing as solid shapes and others as outlines or partial prints. The overall effect is one of diversity and collective action.

“MAKE SURE THAT IN GOOD HANDS GETS INTO THE HANDS
OF ANY YOUNG WOMAN WHO CARES ABOUT MAKING HER
COMMUNITY — AND OUR WORLD — A BETTER PLACE.”


ANNE MOSES, PhD, PRESIDENT AND FOUNDER, IGNITE

Includes
a Playbook
So You Can
Do It, Too

IN GOOD HANDS

REMARKABLE FEMALE POLITICIANS
FROM AROUND THE WORLD
WHO SHOWED UP, SPOKE OUT
AND MADE CHANGE

STEPHANIE MACKENDRICK



No matter where you live or who you hope to represent, the experience of running for office is different if you are a woman.

The women featured in this book have been there. They have seen it all and they know the way around the obstacles — visible or invisible — women face in trying to make change.

In these inspiring true stories from around the world and across the political spectrum, female politicians share their experiences and offer practical advice to anyone who wants to follow in their footsteps. Their grit and determination will lift up any woman seeking success in a world where men often still make the rules.

You'll find out who and what led them to run, how they managed their campaigns and what they fought to accomplish. Most importantly, the Playbook will show you how you can do it, too.

The time for women in politics has never seemed so urgent. With women's political power growing every year, our future is in good hands.

IN GOOD HANDS

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To Mandy Goetze, a founder of The International Alliance of Women, a change agent extraordinaire and dear friend; my hero

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AS THE FOUNDER of IGNITE, the largest and most diverse young women's political leadership organization in the United States, I am relentless in my desire to make sure that young women are ready and eager to become the next generation of political leaders. So imagine my delight when I read *In Good Hands* — a book that shares so much of IGNITE's vision for empowerment.

At IGNITE we train young women to define their personal call to service by asking them several critically important questions: What is the most pressing issue you see in your community? What is your personal connection to that issue? How would you solve it?

Our goal is to help young women see that their personal experiences — no matter how painful or shameful or hard — are exactly what qualify them to lead. Case in point: one of our alumni spent some time as a teenager in and out of the criminal justice system, like so many young people in her community. That is why her platform for city council was so powerful: She could authentically say to the sitting council member, “What have you done for our community over the last 20 years? Let me tell you how your policies have failed, and let me tell you what I would do.” Couple that powerful call to service with real tools, like how to raise money or contact voters or garner endorsements, and you have a real plan for success.

In Good Hands is a must-read for any young woman who is curious about running for office but doesn't know how to make it happen. Providing equal parts inspiration and information, *In Good Hands* tells stories of powerful female role models from around the world who conquered their doubts, ran successful campaigns for public office and then implemented their vision. Young female activists will hear what these leaders accomplished as public servants. More important, they'll get the real story on dos and don'ts for their first time running as a candidate, as well as a handy 12-step roadmap to prepare them for the journey ahead. It can be scary to run for office that first time, but knowing that you have a plan can mitigate some of the fear.

There has never been a more important time to invest in young women

who are passionate about bettering their communities and teach them that political leadership is the most direct way to make change.

The 2016 election in the United States sparked an extraordinary level of political activism among young women across the country. In the face of policies that limit their potential, young women are finally emboldened to own political power. They are fed up with the status quo, and they see political leadership as both desirable and tenable. We need to ensure that we take this moment and turn it into a movement to build the next generation of political leaders. That's where *In Good Hands* comes in. Make sure that it gets into the hands of any budding activist or political leader or frankly any young woman who cares about making her community — and our world — a better place.

Anne Moses, PhD

President & Founder

IGNITE

www.ignitenational.org

DO YOU WANT to solve problems, address issues, bring people together and change the world? Maybe you have thought about running for election in your school, your community or at some level of government. Maybe someone you know has suggested that you should think about running for something. Or maybe you are just curious about what it takes to run in the first place.

Either way, wouldn't it be great if there was one place to go to find out everything you need to know about running for elected office, no matter where and no matter how much — or how little — experience you have? One place for all the inside stuff, the unwritten rules, the things most people don't learn until they are in the middle of running — or worse, after a campaign is all over?

Wouldn't it be even better if you could find out about the stuff that *you* find daunting? Maybe it's speaking in public or asking people for money, or maybe you are uncertain how to get people to listen to you and believe in you. You are holding a book that answers these questions right now!

INSIDER'S GUIDE

In Good Hands is an insider's guide that tells the stories of inspiring women who have put their names on the ballot and how they faced the challenges — big and small — of running for office. It tells you what to expect, how to deal with the tough stuff and why it's worth it to run. And it's not just one woman's view, or from one country or one segment of society. *In Good Hands* is for everyone — it is nonpartisan and inclusive.

I talked to women from all parts of the world, across the political spectrum, about the experience of running for office. What I want to share with you is encouraging and also frank. *In Good Hands* identifies the challenges but, more importantly, shows you how you can meet those challenges and overcome obstacles, even when trying to reach your goals seems overwhelming.

The stories in this book open a window to the thoughts, aspirations and campaigns of other women. You'll see how some of the toughest battles were fought and how you can learn from those battles. Throughout, you'll find

guidelines on what's important and what you need to simply ignore. You'll learn about the pitfalls that are specific to women, the ones that systems and institutions create for us and the ones we unwittingly create for ourselves. And you'll get practical strategies that will help you transform "I'll think about it" into "I'll do it!"

WHY *IN GOOD HANDS*? WHY NOW?

The reason I wrote *In Good Hands* is simple: because it's 2020. The time for women to lead is now. As women, our voices must be heard and our perspectives on peace, conflict, power, economics, community, education and family have never been more needed than they are today. Yet we are underrepresented in almost every nation and across local communities, national governments and international bodies.

Elected office is not for everyone, but everyone should feel equally entitled to consider it as an option. As women, we don't — or at least not as routinely, or as often, as men do.

The world needs the full participation of just over half its population. It needs the different approaches that women often bring to public office. And governing bodies need more than one or two token women to provide "the woman's view," as if all women had only one way of thinking.

I came to this project with 20 years' experience fighting in the trenches to help women advance in their careers, in Canada and internationally. I've had a chance to see at close range the cultural, institutional and individual barriers to women's advancement. Sometimes, it's the system that holds us back. But sometimes, it's our own perceptions of ourselves as women. We are often intimidated by the double standard, the one that makes us feel that we have to be twice as good to go half as far. It makes us overly nervous about making a mistake that crosses the narrow space between being nice (read: "too weak to lead") and outspoken (read: "difficult," "unreasonable" or "aggressive"). But sometimes, we just don't believe in ourselves enough. That's one of the things we can change if more women become public leaders.

HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

In Good Hands answers the questions that many of you have about whether to run for office, how to run for office and when to run for office.

You can read *In Good Hands* cover to cover, or you can start with a topic you want to learn more about, a story that sounds intriguing or resources that address a specific issue you are facing.

Whatever approach you take, be sure to read the stories of women who have run in Part 1: The Journey. Find out what they learned and how they made an impact — in the process, you may find a role model.

Part 2: The Playbook includes a step-by-step guide to building a campaign and developing the personal qualities you will need for your run.

In Part 3: The Deep Dive, you'll find articles, books and organizations to consult when you want to find out more — because there is always more to learn.

A MATTER OF CONFIDENCE

SEVERAL YEARS AGO, I had an amazing opportunity to pose a crucial question to a major public figure. The answer to the question I asked was a revelation.

We were in an elegant meeting room in a stylish Washington, D.C., hotel. The speaker was one of the world's most accomplished women, someone who was distinguished and greatly admired — Madeleine Albright, the first woman to be U.S. secretary of state, serving from 1997 to 2001. The room was full of awesome and talented young women, likely top leaders of the future. They had served in the military, advising generals and being groomed for leadership roles; they were fast-rising business executives, entrepreneurs, lawyers and not-for-profit leaders. I looked around the room and thought to myself, *I could be looking at a future president of the United States!* I fought an involuntary moment of panic that made me feel like a party crasher and pushed aside the inner voice asking its own question: *What are you doing here?*

I was facilitating a discussion on the role of mentoring in career development and leadership. My own qualifications were strong, but looking around the room, I felt self-doubt. I wondered what I could possibly contribute to a crowd like this. But I was really curious about how such accomplished women had attained their positions, what they enjoyed, what they worried about and what they had faced — and faced down — to achieve their goals. One of the young women I spoke to was the communications director for a five-star American general, and I was surprised when she seemed eager to ask *me* questions about career development and what I had learned both personally and professionally. I had the same questions for *her*.

MADELEINE ALBRIGHT HAD FACED DOWN TYRANTS AND DECIDED ON MATTERS OF GLOBAL WAR AND PEACE. SHE HAD BROKEN THE GLASS CEILING AND NOT BEEN CUT BY THE FALLING SHARDS. BUT UNDERNEATH THE MANTLE OF POISE AND SELF-ASSURANCE, SHE WAS JUST LIKE SO MANY WOMEN – DOUBTING HERSELF AND WONDERING WHETHER SHE WAS GOOD ENOUGH FOR THE JOB AT HAND.

The guest of honor, Madeleine Albright, was a legendary supporter of women in politics and public life. During the Clinton administration, in the late 1990s, she spearheaded international relations for the Western world's most powerful nation. She oozed confidence and a steely resolve. Time after time, she took a stand, held a strong position and demonstrated a deep understanding of the political intricacies that made her role so challenging. She was tough and seemed absolutely fearless in making the life-and-death decisions that come with the job. She sat at the front of the room, stylish and calm, taking it all in with sharp eyes that missed nothing. She was genial as she chatted before the event, but she also projected an air of authority.

I realized that this was an opportunity I couldn't miss. I had a question to ask the guest of honor. It was a simple one: "What was the single greatest challenge you faced in your career?"

How would she answer? Would she talk about her background? She was born in the Czech Republic and had immigrated to the United States as a child. Perhaps it was being perceived as a foreigner and feeling like an outsider? Or maybe she would say it was continually being one of the only women in a boys'

PINNED

Remaining confident in the face of real challenges is one of the most important ways to unlock true potential. Even Madeleine Albright was dogged by self-doubt. How did she deal with it? One of the ways she bolstered her self-confidence involved a sizable collection of pins and brooches that she used to give herself a boost when she was facing difficult meetings or intimidating foes. Each brooch was a symbol of how she wanted to feel. One of the most famous is a pin fashioned into a snake and an apple, which she wore after the Iraqi press called her “an unparalleled serpent.”

What does that mean for you? Should you wear a giant pin on your shoulder to run for class president? Or should you wear a certain color to mark your party affiliation? Choose any strategy that is meaningful to you to offset the discomforts that come with taking risks.

club of international diplomats and country leaders. Could it be balancing family and personal time with a series of overwhelmingly demanding roles? Was it making decisions on military action? Looking at her and knowing her story, I found it hard to believe that she could be daunted by any challenge.

She gave her answer without a moment's hesitation: “Self-doubt.”

There was an audible gasp from the audience. *Self-doubt?* How was it possible that this woman who radiated competence and confidence struggled with self-doubt? Madeleine Albright had faced down tyrants and decided on matters of global war and peace. She had broken the glass ceiling and not been cut by the falling shards. But underneath the mantle of poise and self-assurance, she was just like so many women — doubting herself and wondering whether she was good enough for the job at hand.

She often had to make important decisions with significant consequences, and this was daunting. She knew that she was being judged as a trailblazer, her every move considered an indication of whether a woman could handle the job.

She worried whether she had made the right decisions and whether she was doing a good job. It felt relentless. A right or wrong choice could literally change the world.

Wouldn't anyone with those responsibilities doubt themselves? Yes, at least a little. The point of Madeleine Albright's story was that *she didn't let her doubts stop her*.

And that got me thinking about the fundamental importance of self-confidence and how it affects anyone who is trying to decide where to set her sights, how high to aim and how to achieve her goals.

It also got me thinking about the particular relationship between women and self-confidence. There are confident women, just as there are confident men. And there are people of all genders who lack confidence. But research, anecdotes and my own observations all point to the significant gaps in confidence levels between women and men. And because confidence is such an integral part of one's thinking and worldview, people may not even realize how confidence — or a lack of it — is affecting the way they make decisions about their lives.

Just as Madeleine Albright carried out one of the most demanding leadership roles possible, despite the constant challenge of self-doubt, you shouldn't let your doubts stop you either. They are just signals telling you there are factors to consider in a decision you are making or a path you are following. Having self-confidence doesn't mean you ignore doubts, but you keep them in perspective and give them their proper weight.

Because you, as much as anyone else, were born to run.



PART 1

THE JOURNEY

MICHELLE STILWELL

WHEN THE IMPOSSIBLE BECOMES “NO OBSTACLE”

Member of the British Columbia Legislative Assembly, Canada

I HEARD MICHELLE TELL HER story several years ago in Winnipeg, Manitoba, her hometown. She was the guest speaker at a career-development event my organization was running. As she spoke, there were times she was emotional and other moments when you could hear a touch of sadness, but there was never a single note of self-pity. She didn't talk about how wrong things had gone for her, but about how she decided to play the cards life dealt her.

RESILIENCE VS. GOOD LUCK

It would be hard to find someone who better embodies the notion of resilience than Michelle Stilwell. Today Michelle is a member of the British Columbia provincial legislature. But her journey to get to this point wasn't based on good luck. Rather, it required an extraordinary commitment to keep on going in the face of bad luck.

Michelle started out with a lot. She was born smart and athletic. She is a natural organizer and planner. And from an early age, she felt it was important

to use her voice to change things she thought needed changing. She has a deeply ingrained drive to make the world a better place.

At school, Michelle was a top athlete in basketball, baseball, ringette (a form of hockey played with a ring instead of a puck) and track. She was class president and headed up the local youth group. Michelle looked like the student most likely to succeed.

COMING BACK FROM CATASTROPHE

But that all changed in an instant. When she was 17, Michelle was taking a piggyback from a friend when she fell. Michelle broke her neck and became quadriplegic. A whole chapter in her life closed and an entire range of interests and activities was suddenly out of reach. Michelle was in shock. As she absorbed the implications of her injury and adjusted to the “new normal,” she assessed her options.

While still in the rehabilitation hospital, Michelle was introduced to wheelchair basketball. The sports options for quadriplegics are limited, but Michelle had enough use of her hands and arms to play wheelchair basketball. She credits the sport with making her stronger and more independent, and

MICHELLE STILWELL: PROFILE OF A CHAMPION

- 2006** World Championships (Assen, Netherlands): Gold in 200 meters. Silver in 100 meters.
- 2008** Beijing Paralympic Games: Gold in 100 and 200 meters.
- 2011** World Championships (Christchurch, New Zealand): Gold in 100, 200 and 400 meters. Silver in 800 meters.
- 2012** London Paralympic Games: Gold with Paralympic Games record in 200 meters. Silver in 100 meters.
- 2013** World Championships (Lyon, France): Gold in 100, 200 and 800 meters.
- 2016** Rio de Janeiro Paralympic Games: Gold in 100 and 400 meters.

her teammates with teaching her about living with a disability. Perhaps most importantly, she found a new outlet for her drive and passion to excel. A talented athlete before her injury, Michelle became an even more accomplished athlete afterward. She took the wheelchair basketball skills she learned in rehab, started playing locally and discovered her competitive spirit was very much intact. With her innate athleticism, she developed enough strength in her upper body to propel the wheelchair and shoot the ball.

Soon she was playing for the Manitoba wheelchair basketball team, and within two years, Michelle was on the national team, competing at the world championships in Sydney, Australia, and winning a gold medal. Michelle was the first-ever female with quadriplegia to compete in wheelchair basketball at the international level. Shortly after the 2000 Paralympic Games, though, Michelle suffered complications from her spinal cord injuries and ultimately would have multiple surgeries to deal with issues as they arose. The complications forced her to give up competitive wheelchair basketball. It was yet another loss.

Michelle then focused most of her energy on coaching others. It was at a coaching clinic that wheelchair racing coach Peter Lawless spotted her and noticed that she had very quick hands for someone with her functional ability. Peter was determined to recruit Michelle for wheelchair racing.

Michelle has quadriplegia, which means all four limbs are affected. Her upper arms and back are strong, but her wrists and hands have limited function. She is able to make the movements needed to propel the chair forward — a quick downward motion, flicking back on the wheels — but the lack of function in her hands was challenging for basketball.

Michelle was initially reluctant to switch to racing, as she had been a track athlete before her accident and was afraid that she would be frustrated to go back to something she had excelled at before. But Peter was persistent. When she finally agreed to take it on, she started training and competed in her first race. She was not happy to be beaten by a 12-year-old boy, but the loss only made her more determined. Wheelchair racing turned out to be an excellent fit for Michelle. She ramped up her training and began racing in earnest, starting with local events and building up to bigger, more competitive races. By 2005, Michelle was competing in the European Championships. Just two years after taking up the sport, she competed in the T52 quadriplegic class at the World Championships in Assen,

I'M A PLANNER AND AN ORGANIZER. THAT'S MY PERSONALITY. WITH MY INJURY, I TOOK THOSE TRAITS AND TRANSLATED THEM INTO BOARDS AND COMMITTEES IN SPORT. I WAS INVOLVED IN THE WHEELCHAIR SPORTS ORGANIZATION. LIVING LIFE USING A WHEELCHAIR, THERE ARE MANY BARRIERS, AND I STARTED TO USE MY VOICE TO MAKE THE CHANGE THAT NEEDED TO BE MADE.

Netherlands, where she won a silver medal and another gold.

Impressive as these athletic achievements were, Michelle was busy in other areas at the same time. She was a successful motivational speaker. She became a community advocate for people with disabilities and children with special needs. She got married and became a mother. During her competitive years, Michelle continued to be active as a leader.

As she was preparing for her record-breaking London Games, politics suddenly and unexpectedly came into Michelle's life. "I never dreamed in high school that I would ever run — or want to run — as a member of the legislature," she recalled. It just wasn't on her radar.

A RELUCTANT POLITICIAN

A local broadcaster who had become a good friend after interviewing her told Michelle she should consider running for office in the 2011 federal election. He had seen her determination, drive, toughness and leadership skills, all qualities that he thought would make her a good politician. The first thing she said was, "Why me? I don't know anything about politics." But she didn't say no. She thought about it, and she realized that she knew a lot about politics. She had been on numerous boards for sports organizations and knew what was involved

in leadership from those experiences. “I spent 20 years in Para sports, and I can tell you there is a lot of politics in sports.”

She was reluctant, but he persisted. “It can sometimes take a long time to understand what you actually *do* know,” Michelle said.

Michelle didn’t run then, but she got involved. She worked on another candidate’s campaign. “I’m an organizer, so I became the volunteer coordinator, overseeing phone calling, events and the scrutineers [volunteer observers for each party at polling stations].”

When she returned from London, a member of the BC provincial legislature called to ask whether Michelle would speak at a conference. “I was running my own business as a speaker, and I thought it was just another gig, so I said okay,” Michelle remembered. But the conference turned out to be the BC Liberal Party Convention. “Again, I asked, ‘Why me?’” Michelle said. “And he said, ‘Because you tick all the boxes. You are a successful business owner, a wife, a mother, an athlete and you have a disability.’”

“I have trouble saying no,” she confided with a laugh, “so I said yes. Once I agreed to co-chair, that’s when they put on the full-court press. People at the convention kept coming up to me and saying I should run. There were lots of phone calls, lots of encouragement. Christy Clark, who was then premier of British Columbia, called me and that sealed the deal. I’ll tell you she is a great salesperson!”

In January of 2013, Michelle ran unopposed to become the Liberal Party candidate for the riding (electoral district) of Parksville-Qualicum. The election was four months off— not much lead time to learn all she needed to know about politics.

RUNNING ON HER OWN TERMS

Although she was a rookie, Michelle entered into the fray on her own terms. “I was still competing. That was one of the main conditions I insisted on if I was going to run. I was just not prepared to give up sport because I still had goals I wanted to achieve.” So after she was named the Liberal candidate for her district, she left for Australia to train and ultimately to compete in the 2013 World Championships in Lyon, France. Her strength of will and amazing organizational skills were key to her ability to be an athlete and a candidate at the

same time. She said, “I campaigned over the internet. I did a lot of Facebook and video. We sent out mailers. Then I came home during the writ [campaign period] and campaigned in person.” Michelle won her seat by a strong margin.

CHALLENGING BUT REWARDING

Michelle spoke openly of the challenges of her role as representative in the Legislative Assembly. “No one can ever prepare you for it. It’s not 8-hour days — it’s 12- to 14-hour days. You spend weeks away from home. I spend Sunday to Thursday in Victoria. It’s not that far, but too far to commute daily. I have a teenaged son. He is 16 now, but he was just 11 when I was elected. You miss out on a lot and that is something that you struggle with — particularly if you are a woman. I was not at the soccer practices or at the tae kwon do belt trials.”

But that is only part of the story. She went on to add, “Having said that, the biggest surprise in all of it was how rewarding it is. You look around the community and see the changes you have had a part in making. Being in cabinet, you make changes that affect the whole province.”

As a politician, Michelle was empowered to make the kinds of changes that she used to push for as a community advocate. “I am probably proudest of the single-parent employment initiative that we undertook to help single parents live better lives and get off the welfare cycle. We expected around 400 people to apply to participate in the program, and so far, we’ve had 4000. We’ve reached 10 times more people than what we thought. But even something simple like helping a constituent get their electricity turned back on or helping someone get emergency financial assistance so they don’t end up homeless, it’s just so rewarding.”

But with politics, as with life, you can’t please everyone. Michelle discovered that even when you make good public policy, there may be people who will react with hostility.

One situation Michelle found especially difficult was connected to improved transportation options for people with disabilities. She was pleased to have made changes to BC’s disability bus pass program but was shocked when misunderstanding unleashed torrents of anger on social media.

Michelle remembered, “We weren’t taking anything away from anyone, and we were giving more people access to benefits.” But the announcement and

rollout didn't go smoothly. There was confusion about who would qualify for benefits under the new program, and people jumped to conclusions, assuming that the changes meant benefits would be taken away from some recipients. "Twitter and Facebook just exploded with hostility. I couldn't believe the abuse ... but it's part of what you have to deal with."

Michelle's logical thinking and common sense helped her put it all into perspective. "You can't take it personally but sometimes you do," she said, acknowledging that if you are in charge of social assistance and people are in difficult situations, emotions can run high. "You have to acknowledge what others may be going through. What I have to remember is that while my job is to help, I don't have control over everything and I can't fix everything. There is no magic wand."

Michelle summed it up simply. "I believe that every change I make is making things better, so I just have to go with that."



PART 2

THE
PLAYBOOK

SECTION 1.0

GETTING YOURSELF PREPARED

Now that you've had a chance to read all those inspirational profiles, are you ready to get to work on your own leadership and ambitions?

Running for office will allow you to have a real effect on your community, but your ultimate impact will depend, in part, on the preparations you make before you even throw your hat into the ring. You'll want to begin a campaign with clear goals, strong supports and a full toolbox. By laying this groundwork, you will reap benefits for your campaign as well as for your life as an involved citizen.

The Playbook is meant to help you explore your options and reach the level of preparedness that you want and need in order to make a difference through elected office. And even if you don't run, the Playbook can help prepare you for other goals you set — or challenges you face — in life. It will guide you to be clear about your intentions and realize your ambitions.

How do you know when you're ready to put yourself forward as a candidate for election (or for a job, a promotion, a scholarship, an award)? Do you have to tick all the boxes and be 100 percent of what makes an ideal candidate?

The answer is no! But as a female, you may be more likely to answer yes. There's research to back that up. An internal study by Hewlett Packard showed that men will put themselves forward as long as they can meet about 60 percent of the qualifications, but women want to meet 100 percent of them before they feel entitled to apply. When men aren't able to tick a box, they will lobby for the job anyway and talk about how they will acquire the skills they are missing.

What does this mean for you? It means that you don't have to be perfect to go forward.

WHAT'S YOUR GOAL?

Do you aim for excellence or perfection? Here's a quiz to find out. Jot down your answers — yes or no — on a piece of paper to calculate your score:

1. I prioritize my to-do list and focus on the most important tasks to ensure that I get the most out of my efforts. I know some tasks won't get done.
2. I don't ever stop until I finish everything on my to-do list. It's important to finish everything you start.
3. I try to achieve maximum impact with everything on my list. I never give less than 100 percent.
4. I am focused on overall impact, not on each task. I know that 80 percent of results come from 20 percent of effort.
5. When a new job or project comes up that I'm interested in, I put my name forward if I can meet more than half the criteria. I need challenges and "stretch assignments" to grow.
6. I need to meet 100 percent of the criteria before I will apply for a position or a project. I won't put myself forward unless I'm fully qualified.
7. If I am able to get agreement on almost all the issues I put forward at a meeting, I feel great!
8. If I wasn't able to get agreement on all the items I put forward, I'll wonder what I did wrong.

Score one point for each yes you answered on questions 2, 3, 6 and 8. Deduct one point for each yes you answered on questions 1, 4, 5 and 7.

If you scored 0, you don't let perfectionism hold you back.

If you scored between 1 and 3, you may be seeking perfection too often, but you are able to go forward nonetheless.

If you scored 4, think about whether you need to improve your effectiveness or whether it's really perfectionism that is holding you back.

SETTING REALISTIC EXPECTATIONS

The key to success is to focus on your goals, not your mistakes. When mistakes happen — and they do for everyone — learn from them and move on. Once you accept this, you can set achievable expectations.

What is the difference between excellence and perfection? Excellence is setting a high standard for yourself and delivering on it.

When you focus on excellence, you are concentrating on the process, on what you can control and how you will go about being the best you can be. If you seek perfection, you are focused only on a specific outcome, one that may be impossible to attain.

Achieving excellence makes you feel proud and confident, and that means taking on new challenges — stretching and embracing risks — will be easier. But perfectionism, on the other hand, is setting impossible and unsustainable standards. It's all or nothing. And no one achieves 100 percent success all the time. Getting perfect results 9 times out of 10 shouldn't make you feel like a failure just because one time didn't go exactly as planned.

People who are insecure may feel the need to be perfect and therefore above criticism, but it doesn't work that way — no one can get it right all the time. Perfectionism erodes confidence; striving for excellence builds it up.

ASSESSING YOUR STRENGTHS AND WEAKNESSES

Before getting into the competitive political arena, you'll need to do some self-reflection. This will help you understand how you lead (your leadership style), how you approach working with people, how best to pace your work and how you respond to rules set by others.

There are no good or bad answers and there is no “particular profile” that you have to worry about fitting into. But the greater your insight into your own unique style, the better you will be able to prepare yourself to meet your goals.

For example, if you are a 100-mile-an-hour talker, you may need to slow down and focus more on listening. If you have trouble remembering names, you may need to push yourself to meet people and practice. Having a good understanding of yourself will help you identify strengths you can use to your best advantage and challenges you will need to work through.

KNOW YOURSELF!

A self-assessment provides useful insights you can act on. Answer these basic questions, adding details and examples, to create a thumbnail sketch of what makes you *you*.

PLANNING AND ORGANIZATION

Do you like to plan and prioritize tasks and finish them one at a time? Or do you like having a variety of tasks on the go, rolling with it when things change last minute?

PEOPLE STYLE

Are you energized by meeting people? Do you enjoy large meetings and conferences? Or do you need to be alone to recharge your energy after meeting people or being in crowds?

ATTITUDE TO RULES

Do you feel strongly that there's a right way to do things? Do you like to follow those rules and pay attention to details? Or do you feel there should be flexibility in how things get done?

DECISION-MAKING

Do you like to “think big” and feel that if it hasn't been done before, you don't mind being the first? Or do you prefer to think things through and make decisions carefully, avoiding unnecessary risks?

In the Deep Dive section, you will find information and links to some of the best online tools that you can use for more thorough self-assessment.

MAKING A PERSONAL SUPPORT PLAN

Although you are just one person, politics is a team sport. And you're the captain of two teams — your campaign team and your personal support team.

The importance of your campaign team may seem obvious, but your personal support team is equally important. To be at your best, it's smart and strategic to make sure you aren't operating on your own — or feeling alone — when you run.

An athlete has a coach, a physiotherapist, a nutritionist and likely many others who help her achieve her goals. She also relies on family and friends to keep her upbeat and help her get through challenging times.

The good news is that your support team can come from almost anywhere. Here are some of the kinds of people you might consider adding to your support team (it's okay if you can't cover them all):

1. A really close friend or relative you can confide anything to, who won't judge you if you are struggling or unsure and who will also help you keep your feet on the ground when you need a reality check.
2. A romantic or life partner who is behind you and ready to support you in your campaign.
3. Your family members — parents, siblings, cousins, aunts, uncles — who understand you.
4. A circle of three or more friends or relatives you respect, who have different areas of experience and skill and who you can call on for advice. (This is sometimes called a “personal advisory board” or a “kitchen cabinet.”)
5. If you're in school, a supportive teacher, advisor or guidance counselor.
6. A boss who supports you with some work flexibility or time off. Or if you work for yourself, you might have backup support so you can spend time on the campaign without harming your business.

- An organization you have found or joined with a track record of supporting women who run for office.

DEVELOPING RESILIENCY

Things don't always go as smoothly as we would like. In fact, it's rare to take on a major challenge like an election campaign without experiencing setbacks. That's why resiliency is such an important factor in success. But what is resiliency and how do you get it?

A simple way to think of it is the capacity to "bounce back." It's not just being tenacious and slogging on grimly; it's also being able to regain your sense of optimism and well-being after you've been through a difficult period. Resiliency also entails a sense of proportion, allowing you to put negative events in the proper context.

How does resiliency relate to election campaigns? Here are two scenarios to consider:

SCENARIO 1: You've just received the results of a recent poll that shows you trailing your opponent by a wide margin. It's early in the campaign, but the gap between you and the leader is daunting. You've worked hard and you are understandably discouraged. What happens next?

	RESILIENT	NON-RESILIENT
Tactical response	I'll analyze the results to look for factors contributing to the gap and develop plans with my team to counteract them.	Maybe it's best to cut my losses instead of trying to win. Maybe the goal is to stop the opponent from a landslide victory.
Emotional response	This is bad news, but it gives me important information about where to focus to make up the difference in support.	Wow, I think this may be hopeless. Why did I ever think this was a good idea?

SCENARIO 2: You’ve been in the first of three all-candidates’ debates. It wasn’t your finest hour. One of the moderator’s questions took you by surprise. Your opponent pounced on your misstep and scored a lot of points. The consensus of your team and the local newspaper is that your opponent won the debate.

	RESILIENT	NON-RESILIENT
Tactical response	I know I can do better. She outdueled me this time, but I have two more debates to win people over. I’ll do more research, and now that I know how she operates, I will be ready for the next time we debate.	I am going to rethink whether to participate in the next debate. There’s no point in trying to defend myself after this.
Emotional response	This feels awful. But I’ve been through worse and it’s something I can recover from. It’s all part of the process and I am learning a lot.	This is humiliating. I’ve completely let down the whole team. I don’t know how I can go on.

USING EMOTIONS TO HELP YOU

You can prepare for a lot of things, but there is no way to anticipate every possible situation you may find yourself in. When there are no obvious rules and no previous experiences to go by, you need to rely on what you might call your “gut instinct” or “sixth sense” to make decisions.

Have you ever found yourself in a situation where you were feeling very certain about a decision or a direction to take, but you didn’t know exactly why you felt that way? That’s your subconscious at work, giving you the cumulative benefit of everything you’ve experienced, learned and felt before your conscious mind can sort it all through and retrieve the facts. That’s why it’s important to heed those feelings and take them into account.

In what kinds of situations do you need to pay attention to your gut? Ask yourself these questions about something you are confronting:

SECTION 2.0

GETTING STARTED

**YOUR 12-STEP
CAMPAIGN PLAN
WORKBOOK**

ASSESS AND BUILD YOUR SUPPORT SYSTEM

DECIDE YOU'RE INTERESTED IN RUNNING!

This is the most important step of all. You feel ready and confident. You've thought it through and now you're ready to go!

FIND A TRUSTED SUPPORTER

Now that you've decided to run, you need someone you can trust, someone who really supports you and believes in you as a candidate, to help you figure out some important next steps. It could be a close friend, a member of your family or someone you have met through your community activities or campaign volunteering. This person should be someone you can be honest with in moments of doubt as well as when things are going well. Pick someone who will be honest with you, too — who will push you when you need a nudge and encourage you when the going gets tough. This is the person you will lean on, particularly as you get started. You can be casual about the arrangement and ask if they would mind being a sounding board for you as you develop your ideas and run your campaign, as needed. Or you could make it a more structured arrangement and ask if they would be an advisor and meet with you regularly.

FIND AN ORGANIZATION THAT SUPPORTS WOMEN CANDIDATES (AND FIRST-TIME CANDIDATES)

There are organizations that provide campaign training, coaching and mentors. If you can't find one in your area, excellent training programs are available online. Check the list of organizations and programs in the Deep Dive section.



PART 3

THE
DEEP DIVE

BROWSE. READ. EXPLORE. CONNECT.

The Deep Dive is the final item in your toolkit for running, or preparing to run, for office. Here you will find a broad sampling of information, including places to find out more about making a run for office, resources to help you on your journey, websites to visit and books and articles to read.

- I. Finding Support and Learning How: Organizations Supporting Women Candidates**
- II. Essential Information**
- III. Campaign Basics: Learning the Ropes**
- IV. Campaign Costs: Raising and Handling Campaign Funds**
- V. Books and Articles That Inspire and Inform**
- VI. Live Viewing of Government Proceedings**

I. FINDING SUPPORT AND LEARNING HOW: ORGANIZATIONS SUPPORTING WOMEN CANDIDATES

There are numerous organizations set up specifically to help women enter into politics and run for office. Some of them run programs that provide training and advice, provide tips on raising campaign funds and include online communities where you can learn and share your ideas. Here are some you might want to check out.

Center for American Women and Politics (CAWP) (U.S.)

cawp.rutgers.edu | [@CAWP_RU](https://twitter.com/CAWP_RU)

Research on women's participation in politics and government, and training for women candidates, including the Ready to Run campaign training program for women.

Emerge America (U.S.)

www.emergeamerica.org | [#emergenow](https://twitter.com/EmergeAmerica) | [@EmergeAmerica](https://twitter.com/EmergeAmerica)

Mission is to increase the number of Democratic women leaders from diverse backgrounds in public office through recruitment and training and by providing a powerful network.

EMILY's List (U.S.)

www.emilyslist.org | [@emilyslist](https://twitter.com/emilyslist)

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