

J. WALTER THOMPSON COMPANY

H. R. HALDEMAN
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Dear Dick:

Enclosed is a first draft of some general thoughts regarding political campaigning and some specific ideas for implementation.

I hope you'll be able to take a few minutes to read through it because I am firmly convinced that the whole basic approach to campaigns must be revised - and you are in an especially good position to do this in 1968.

Even if you don't buy all of these ideas, I think you'll agree with the basic concept and with at least some of the specific suggestions. Rather than trying to finalize a formal and complete recommendation for you, I felt it might be more productive to get your reaction to this draft first - and then to revise and extend it along the lines you feel would be most productive.

In other words, this is a general start on the subject, not an attempt at a finished product.

A great deal of truly creative thinking is needed in the development of ways to use TV, and this is especially important if this general approach is used. I have not tried to develop these in the attached draft.

The pre-primary travel period and the primary campaigns offer ideal opportunities to test and refine campaign techniques, and all of the points in the attached draft apply to this period just as much as to the general campaign.

Hope this will be of some help.

Cordially,



H. R. Haldeman

The Honorable Richard M. Nixon
20 Broad Street
New York 10005

cc: Rose Mary Woods
Tom Evans
Dwight Chapin

Enclosure

I. INTRODUCTION

CAMPAIGNING

The time has come for political campaigning -- its techniques and strategies -- to move out of the dark ages and into the brave new world of the omnipresent "eye."

A candidate for any city-wide, state-wide or national office can't afford the old "tried and true" methods of campaigning: six speeches a day, plus several handshaking receptions, a few hours at factory gates and a soul-crushing travel schedule. Just because it has always been this way doesn't mean it always has to be.

Let's look at the whole thing from the viewpoint of just basic logic. If a national candidate actually does six speeches a day, six days a week, for the full eight-week campaign period, he'll make 288 speeches. If he has a spectacular crowd-gathering ability (or staff), he might average 5,000 per speech (but no one ever has). So he will have spoken in the flesh to a total of 1,440,000 people. A reasonable estimate is that at least 75% of those people are his loyal adherents. So he's had the opportunity to convert only 380,000. True, most elections, except national, are won by less than that. But then, will he really convert this 25% -- and is it really 25%? Probably more likely 10%.

What happens to the candidate in this process? He becomes punchy, mauled by his admirers, jeered and deflated by his

opponent's supporters (and paid troublemakers), misled by the super-stimulation of one frenzied rally after another. He has no time to think, to study his opponent's strategy and statements, to develop his own strategy and statements. No wonder the almost inevitable campaign dialogue borders so near the idiot level.

Yes, but think of the great value it has in "firing up the troops." Baloney! Analyze carefully the actual number of troops that count in a campaign, and you'll find they are very few, can be fired up much more effectively and efficiently by small "private" sessions on an informal basis with the candidate, and are themselves being worn to a frazzle and constantly diverted from important activity (precinct work and telephoning) to crank up a crowd for the next rally or airport arrival.

True, maybe, but the real importance is the effect on news media and thus indirectly on their vast audiences. That's the worst argument of all. How many stories per day will any newspaper or radio or television station carry about a single candidate? Answer: one - if he's really lucky, important or controversial. So what's the use of roaring around making six, eight or ten stories every day?

Obviously it's to get localized coverage in each area of the constituency. But isn't the wire story, the commentator or the syndicated columnist what really counts? It sure is!

So what do you do - quit campaign travels and sit on the front porch? Not at all. You plan a campaign that is designed

to cover the important localities, provide excitement and stimulation for your supporters, generate major news every day, generate intensive coverage in depth by commentators and columnists, develop a meaningful dialogue (even if one-sided), and still offer a reasonable chance of the candidate's survival.

II. GENERAL APPROACH

How, then, does a candidate plan his campaign schedule (and build his campaign organization) to accomplish these objectives?

First - the whole approach and the basis for all planning and structuring must be directed to the same concept: that the candidate's time, energy and thinking will be programmed for maximum possible benefit. And maximum benefit is defined as reaching the most people most effectively. And this does not necessarily mean in the flesh.

He has to take maximum advantage of the media of mass communications, with emphasis on that or those which reach the most people and present him most favorably and believably. Television will undoubtedly be pre-eminent - but radio, newspapers and magazines should not be overlooked.

One news lead per day

The first consideration is development of one major news lead per day. (Herb Klein argues strongly for two leads per day - one timed for AM newspapers and another for PM's and TV/radio news. This should be carefully analyzed, because he's probably right. On the other hand, one per day is obviously more desirable from our point of view, and in a presidential campaign the AM's and PM's both have to cover a candidate's news, so there may be a way to work satisfactorily with just one lead per day - I hope so.) This can result from a speech made at a rally, a statement at a formal news conference, a remark made apparently offhandedly

at an airport or on the sidewalk, a television or radio address, a "confidential" interview with a columnist, a reaction to a planted position or question by a prominent supporter, an answer to the opponent's attack or position, release of a white paper, a statement by a prominent supporter expert in some field, reaction to a major external news break, or just a formal news release.

Over the period of the campaign, all of these and other devices should be used on a carefully planned but apparently random basis. No regular pattern should be established, and the element of surprise should be skilfully utilized.

Not a single day should pass without such a news lead, planned in advance as to content and method of release and coordinated with the total campaign effort. The whole approach should be one of initiation and attack, rather than reaction and counterattack. The timing and approach should not be dictated by the opposition.

Obviously, it will be necessary at times to react and to counterattack - and to revise strategy to fit the developing situation and the opponent's strategy. But this in no way precludes the necessity for a complete, preconceived plan, even though it be revised daily.

Overall schedule

After an overall skeleton is developed on the basis of the daily news lead, the candidate's schedule can be filled in, using

his time for a balanced program of corollary supporting activities. Major needs will include at least one major public appearance almost every working day, one or two offbeat "color" activities, many short and a few long personal or small group meetings, ample staff time, frequent studio time (TV and radio) and, by a wide margin most important, lots of free time for thinking, rest, recreation, reading and unplanned activity. Also maximum use of programmed phone calls.

Major public appearances

The daily public appearance(s) may or may not be the base for the news lead as mentioned above. When it is, it should be carefully staged - and when it's not, the speech should be standard so we retain control of what the lead will be. These appearances should not all be rallies. Some should be motorcades, staged visits to plants, hospitals, etc., large worker meetings, headquarters drop-bys. Some should be at night, some in the daytime. All should be designed for maximum coverage - and should not be restricted to the stereotyped kinds of political appearances. They should be dictated by the overall strategy, not by the pressures of local organizations or leaders.

Offbeat activity

The offbeat "color" activity should be planned for particular effects, generally in the "image-building" area. In many cases these would appear to be unscheduled and spontaneous. They would always be an integral part of the overall plan. These

would include frequent use of "drop-bys" at group meetings, human interest individual contacts at all levels (the shoeshine boy, Billy Graham, a kid who has collected campaign funds, spectator or participant sports, etc.). Some leeway for completely opportunistic activity, with staff always on the alert for possibilities.

Meetings

The personal or small group meetings would not be publicized and are used to make points primarily with people who will in turn reach large numbers of other people. Concentration is on TV and radio commentators, columnists, syndicate feature writers, publishers, station owners, major civic leaders, party leaders, specific issue spokesmen.

It will be argued that this approach simply does not cover enough cities - there is inadequate geographic spread. The answer is that the important thing is not the one city where the candidate is, but the coverage of his activities that goes into all cities. Only a minute fraction of the people in a city where the candidate appears actually see him in the flesh. The vast majority just watch on TV or read about it in the newspapers. To these people, what difference does it make if he's in their city, the neighboring one, or one clear across the country?

The geographic pattern should be developed to provide balanced regional coverage, with proper representation of large and small cities, urban and rural, etc. But an appearance in a small farm town in Iowa can be just as effective in its impact on

an Oregon small farm town resident as it is on the lowans. In other words, people identify with other similar people - so get coverage of whatever group you're with and you'll affect all the similar groups who see the coverage.

Programmed phone calls

Use phone calls to keep troops fired up. During allotted time, two staff men work on placing calls. Get one lined up ahead so candidate sits at one phone - pushes buttons to utilize two lines alternatively - talks for 2 minutes on each call. Can do about 25 calls in an hour. On some can go even faster. Staff have calls programmed ahead with background card on each for candidate's quick briefing.

Use phone calls to maintain ties with key commentators and columnists. Call them two or three times a week for their reactions to campaign. Don't tell them anything - ask for their analysis and ideas. Pick some favorites and work them hard. Build the list as fast as possible and keep adding to it.

Use a phone car for all long drives, and use time for phone calls as per above - or else program car and other travel time for one of specific purposes - i.e., staff, personal meetings, work, rest, etc.

Radio network

Use network radio to keep troops fired up - by buying 5 minutes on national network every day through entire campaign - at 6:30 pm local time. Have a daily report from the candidate

and marching orders from campaign manager. A supply of fill-ins could be pretaped for emergency use, but normally candidate would tape current message each day. This could be delivered to local outlet for network feed - or fed by phone. One staff man would be producer and program would be tied to overall plan.

Mail

Use mail to fire up troops. Draft and start typing a standard but personalized letter to each local chairman. Mail them all two weeks before election day. Just thanks and encouragement. Signed by candidate.

III. ADDENDA

AVERAGE DAY'S CONTENTS

Start at 9:00 AM - finished by 10:00 PM

Work 6 days a week. Use the Sunday for complete break - rest and reading and planning.

Spend 2 hours on public events

2 hours on private meetings

2 hours for rest and writing and staff

2 hours for meals

2 hours for travel plus some of above time

1 hour for phone calls

1/2 hour briefing for traveling press - every day

1 1/2 hour TV taping.

SOME BASIC RULES

Don't go to cities that don't have adequate facilities

- good hotel with right room arrangements
- airport proximity and reasonable weather conditions
- good local organization for rally work, meeting, etc.
- major communications facilities - TV, radio, phone

Don't plan schedule on any basis except what we want.

Don't do any public fund raising during campaign -

use phone calls, private meetings and letters for this.

Use airport arrivals for offbeat color - suburban rallies, etc.,

but don't cut in to main public event.

Use a few motorcades where they'll really work - and go all out.

For all other travel, use unpublicized routes, but look
for offbeat possibilities.

SAMPLE DAY 1

9:00 leave hotel for
9:15 Publisher meeting - 1/2 hour - at the paper
9:45 leave for TV studio
10:00 makeup and preparation for TV taping
10:30-11:00 tape major statement for today
11:15 leave studio for luncheon at hotel
11:30 pre-reception with small group of civic leaders
12:00 group into luncheon - candidate to room to eat - 1 hour
1:00 candidate to luncheon - standard speech - 1/2 hour
15 minutes handshaking, etc.
Drop by convention luncheon on way out or in
2:00 return to room for phone calls - 1 hour
staff work - 1 hour
4:00 private meetings in suite - individuals - 15 minutes each -
3 per hour - 6 meetings
5:00 leave for airport - fly to next city - dinner and staff work
on plane
10:00 arrive at hotel

SAMPLE DAY 2

9:00 leave hotel for airport
9:45 take off for next city
2 hours travel - staff work on plane
11:45 arrive new airport -
SUBURBAN WELCOME RALLY
standard speech
12:30 drive into town
1:00 arrive at convention luncheon in progress for drop-by
1:30 to suite -
1/2 hour lunch - staff
1 hour phone calls
3:00 to TV studio for panel program
3:15 at studio - makeup and preparation
3:45-4:15 tape show
4:30 leave for veterans' hospital visit - offbeat
4:45-5:30 at hospital
6:00 arrive at hotel - to suite - rest
6:30-7:00 cocktails - 6 key civic leaders
7:00 prepare for evening meeting - eat dinner
8:15 leave for major coliseum rally
8:30 speak at rally
9:30 return to hotel - overnight

PHONE CALL PROCEDURE

1. Maintain roto card file - 4 x 6 cards alpha by name.
Front side - name, phone numbers, basic data - political, personal, etc.
Reverse - complete record of contacts - phone, mail, personal
2. Staff pulls cards for today's calls - figure ratio of number to time - stack in order of priority.
3. Note with each card suggested points for candidate to make.
4. Staff places calls - while candidate is on preceding one.
Chat if time available - get reading and make notes.
5. Hand card and notes to candidate before he takes call - for quick pre-briefing.
6. Staff listen in on call - record any needed follow-up. Post info on card - refile - toss out notes except follow-up.
7. Two staff men needed to do this - one on current call, one on next one.

NOTE: Use conference calls - i.e., all local chairmen set up by regional man.