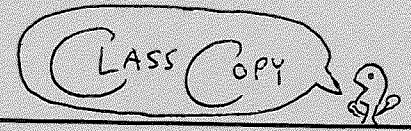


# Campaign Techniques



For your reference, these are the techniques commonly used by or seen in modern political campaigns.

- **Scapegoating:** Identifying a common enemy (Washington Bureaucrats); someone, some organization, some “other” that is blamed for a problem.
- **Wedge Issues:** Political, social, economic, or other issues that are controversial and divisive.
- **Defining your opponent in an unfavorable context:** Make the other candidates seem like bad choices for office (too inexperienced, weak on defense, a “tax and spend” liberal, too extreme, owned by special interests, etc.).
- **Spin:** Portray events in a way meant to sway public opinion.
- **Positive ads (about you) and negative ads (about opponents)**
- **Push Polling/Misleading Statistics:** Polls and figures which look objective, but are framed in a subjective manner—polls given to groups which support certain policies (i.e. polling teachers about Reforming Education).
- **Audience targeting:** -appealing to specific age groups, religious affiliations, income brackets, etc.
- **Sound bites:** Brief statements taken from candidate speeches (i.e. “It’s the economy, stupid” or “Read my lips”).
- **Personal image:** Portraying your candidate as heroic, decisive, energetic, and compassionate, an outsider, etc.
- **Presentation:** Using your style and color of clothing, gestures, accent, etc. to convey a positive image to the voters.
- **Audience participation:** Involve the audience, or walks the crowd to shake hands, etc.
- **Symbols:** An image that conveys what the candidate stands for or associates them with a specific group or idea.
- **Momentum:** Showing movement in the polls.
- **Flag-waving:** Appealing to patriotic zeal or national pride.
- **Subliminal messages:** Inadequate to affect awareness, but able to provoke emotional response.
- **Attention grabbers:** Something that makes people want more.
- **Sex appeal:** Looks, dress, actions (be careful here...).
- **Testimonials:** Personal recommendations in favor of character, conduct, ability, etc.
- **Half-truths:** Lying by omission; quoting out of context; partial truths intended to deceive or mislead.
- **Emotionally charged words:** Coward, hypocrite, criminal, patriot, etc.
- **Flattery**
- **Deflection Techniques:** Changing the subject; answering a question with a question; attacking the source; creating a distraction; putting forth a lightning rod issue (diverts attention by using someone who attracts powerful, usually negative feeling and reactions); the “no denial/no comment” denial.
- **Lowering Expectations:** Admitting weaknesses and doing better than expected, so you look like a winner.
- **Empathy:** Identifying with another’s situation, feelings, and motive.
- **Slogans and theme songs:** Expresses the aims or nature of a candidate.
- **Repetition:** Repeating name, words, or the slogan to make a deeper impression.
- **“Pressing the flesh”:** Greeting the people, shaking hands and kissing babies.
- **Children:** You will do anything to help them (education, protection, raise expectations, etc.), because they are the future....
- **Identifying with a group:** Allying with firefighters, law enforcement, teachers, doctors, labor unions, special interests (NRA, Sierra Club, ACLU, etc.).