

## **What are some of the challenges of being a candidate, and how do you overcome them?**

In this video, former and current candidates and those who have supported them discuss the difficulties of candidacy and how they overcame them.

### **1. “The impact on family”**

The time commitment required for candidacy inevitably affects the amount of time you are able to spend at home. Campaigning involves a lot of work in the evenings, which means you may be separated from your children at times. Participants describe how many marriages suffer because of the sacrifices of developing a career in politics. Having the full support of your friends and family in your decision to run as a candidate is key to overcoming this conflict.

### **2. “There are economic considerations”**

Since being a candidate is a full-time job, most people need to take time off work to pursue this endeavor. Besides being able to support yourself and your family financially during this time, there is also a lot of uncertainty – for example, what happens if you lose? How will you re-enter the workforce? Having something to fall back on is important in this regard.

### **3. “The minute you step outside your door, you’re playing that role”**

Once you become a candidate, you are in the public eye. Participants describe this as a difficult part of candidacy, especially when you are publicly scrutinized, ridiculed and have your reputation challenged. To overcome this, participants had to develop a very thick skin and become comfortable defending themselves.

### **4. “No one can win a campaign without volunteers”**

Building your team and a campaign infrastructure is a challenge in the beginning, especially as a first-time candidate with little experience. Participants describe the importance of rallying the support of volunteers, because running a campaign is not something you can do in isolation. Empowering your team, making them feel part of a cause, appreciating their hard work and relinquishing some control and trusting them are crucial for success.