

What is needed?

- We must educate ourselves on the candidates and they need to educate themselves on the community. It's time to identify qualified candidates and be prepared to work for and with them.
- Potential candidates must prepare for hard work, intense expectations, and bad press.
- Candidates need support on many levels: emotional, mental, spiritual, financial, etc.
- Potential candidates need to be educated on the difference between support and obligation.
- Hire professionals to manage your campaign. Professionally prepared campaign materials, strategic management of the candidate's time, careful tailoring of the message for differing constituencies are essential to success.
- Current and past female leaders have insights and experiences to share with potential candidates. They can mentor emerging leaders regarding the realities of running for and serving in public office. They can share information regarding the impacts - both positive and negative - to the candidate, their family and their careers.
- A mentor can share the history of the existing issues in the community and introduce other women to professional and civic organizations such as the Jacksonville Regional Chamber of Commerce, League of Women Voters, Leadership Jacksonville and JCCI.
- In order to win, women need not reinvent the process to win elections. All candidates must build a strong team for personal and campaign support. The personal team will take care of the needs of the candidates and her family. The political team will provide strong advisors in the areas of strategy, scheduling, public perception, technology, and finances. The strongest teams will be diverse and include both men and women.
- Women are harshly judged and criticized on issues of appearance and perceptions every day, especially by other women. Women need to support, not cut down, other women.

Elexia asked the attendees to share what they learned from this meeting and the "aha!" moments they heard:

- It is time to bind together, find strong candidates, and work toward political balance in our community for all our sakes.
- Educate yourself, engage in your community, and be part of the solution.
- Embrace those women willing to study, stand up and jump into the fray.
- It's time to "woman-up".
- Running for public office is not a hobby, it is a business.

Attendees: Elexia Coleman-Moss, *Facilitator*, Yinka Ajitutu, Lee Brown, Mickee Brown, Susan Burroughs, Stacie Bucher, Ronline Cannady, Robin Cartwright, Cara Connolly, Sara Conrad, Leslie Conty, Michelle Conty, Heather Corey, Skip Cramer, DeeAnne Crookham, Terri Davlantes, Adrian Delaney, Tiffany Duhart, Brenna Durden, Diane Gilbert, Jennifer Gornto, Melissa Gross-Arnold, Karen Green, Carol Hladki, Ruth Ann Hepler, Alberta Hipps, Amy Hays Holliman, Meghan Hotchkiss, Ashleigh Howard, Helen Jackson, Mia Jones, Teri Ketchum, Joann Manning, Jennifer Mansfield, Karen Mathis, Carla Marlier, Casey McConnell, Kathleen McKenzie, Kimberly Miller, Audrey Moran, Angie Nixon, Jean Pyle, Marvin Reese, Katie Ross, Alicia Somers, Tonya Smart, Linda Storey, Alisha Sullivan, Michelle Tappouni, Deborah Thompson, Bobbi Warford, Kathi Webber, Kelly White, Rhonda Williams and Gwen Yates.

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