

PEW RESEARCH CENTER FOR THE PEOPLE & THE PRESS
CAMPAIGN CONSULTANTS SURVEY
— FINAL TOPLINE —
November 1997 – March 1998
N=200

INTRODUCTION: Hello, I am _____, calling for Princeton Survey Research Associates on behalf of The Pew Research Center for the People & the Press in Washington, D.C. May I please speak with (RESPONDENT). (WHEN RESPONDENT IS ON PHONE:) (REPEAT INTRODUCTION IF NECESSARY.) Is now a convenient time to conduct the interview that Andrew Kohut wrote to you about? (IF NO: ASK TO SET UP AN APPOINTMENT.)

S.1 About how many Congressional, Senate, or presidential races did you personally work on in the 1996 election cycle? Would you say fewer than five, five to 10, 10 to 15, or more than 15? (INCLUDE ANY TYPE OF WORK ON A CAMPAIGN.) (IF DID NOT WORK ON ANY 1996 RACES ASK: Did you work on any Congressional, Senate, or presidential races in either the 1992 or 1994 election cycles?)

35	Fewer than five
37	Five to 10
13	10 to 15
14	More than 15
1	Didn't work on any 1996 races (VOL)
<u>0</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

S2. Was your role in these races primarily as a pollster, a media consultant, a fundraiser, or a general consultant? (IF RESPONDENT VOLUNTEERS MORE THAN ONE ROLE, PROBE: Which one role did you play the most? Pollster, media consultant, fundraiser, or general consultant?)

28	Pollster
40	Media consultant
11	Fundraiser
19	General consultant
1	Other (VOL—RECORD)
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

S3. In your firm, are you currently a principal, a senior associate, or a junior associate? (PROBE "OTHER" FOR PRINCIPAL, SENIOR ASSOCIATE, OR JUNIOR ASSOCIATE.)

89	Principal
11	Senior associate
—	Junior associate (TERMINATE)
—	Other (VOL—RECORD; TERMINATE)
—	Don't know/Refused (TERMINATE)

Q1. In what year was your first PAID campaign job? (RECORD FOUR-DIGIT YEAR)

7	Pre-1970s
36	1970-1979
42	1980-1989
14	1990-1997
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q2. In that job were you part of the campaign staff or were you a consultant?

65	Campaign staff
30	Consultant
5	Other (VOL—RECORD)
<u>0</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q3. What type of campaign was it? Local, state, national House or Senate, or presidential? (IF NECESSARY: How did you spend MOST of your time?)

21	Local
24	State
32	National House or Senate
14	Presidential
8	Other (VOL—RECORD)
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q4. All things considered, how satisfied are you with your CURRENT job overall? Very satisfied, mostly satisfied, mostly dissatisfied, or very dissatisfied?

		---Government Leaders ¹ ---			
		General	Pres.		Civil
		<u>Public</u> ²	<u>Congress</u>	<u>Appoint.</u>	<u>Servants</u>
60	Very satisfied	43	57	64	56
35	Mostly satisfied	48	39	34	38
4	Mostly dissatisfied	5	0	1	4
0	Very dissatisfied	3	0	0	1
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>1</u>	<u>4</u>	<u>1</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100	100

¹ These figures are from a survey of 81 members of Congress, 98 Presidential Appointees and 151 members of the Senior Executive Service conducted by the Pew Research Center October, 1997 through February, 1998.

² General public figures are from a nationwide survey of 1,206 adults conducted by the Pew Research Center March 25-29, 1998.

Q5. Thinking now about political consultants as a group—that is, general campaign managers, pollsters, media consultants and fundraisers—which of the following do you think MOST motivates professional consultants? (READ)
(RANDOMIZE 1-4:)

- 26 Political beliefs
- 32 The thrill of competition
- 26 Money
- 9 Political power and influence
- 2 All of the above/Other (VOL—RECORD) (DO NOT READ)
- 5 Don't know/Refused (DO NOT READ)
- 100

Q6. When you consider taking on a race, how important (INSERT ITEM)? Very important, somewhat important, not too important, or not at all important? ... How important (INSERT ITEM)? ... (RANDOMIZE:)

	<u>Very Important</u>	<u>Somewhat Important</u>	<u>Not too Important</u>	<u>Not at all Important</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. Are the political beliefs of the candidate	58	36	3	1	2=100
b. Is the candidate's ability to raise money and pay bills	55	42	3	0	*=100
c. Is the candidate's chances of winning	16	61	15	6	2=100
d. Is the candidate's ability to govern effectively	39	40	12	6	3=100

Q7. How much of an impact do you think professional political consultants have on (INSERT ITEM)? A great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or none at all? ... How about on (INSERT ITEM)? ... (RANDOMIZE:)

	<u>Great Deal</u>	<u>Fair Amount</u>	<u>Not very Much</u>	<u>None At all</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. The public policy agenda in the United States	12	42	43	2	1=100
b. The way political leaders conduct themselves once in office	10	39	43	4	4=100

Q8. From your perspective, how would you rate the quality of (INSERT ITEM) these days? Excellent, good, only fair, or poor? ... How about the quality of (INSERT ITEM)? ... (RANDOMIZE:)

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. The candidates running for the House and Senate	6	46	42	6	*=100
b. Professional political consultants	6	50	37	5	2=100
c. Political journalists	2	30	49	18	1=100

Q9. In the time that you have worked in politics, has the quality of (INSERT ITEM) gotten better, gotten worse, or stayed about the same? ... How about the quality of (INSERT ITEM)? ... (RANDOMIZE:)

		Gotten <u>Better</u>	Gotten <u>Worse</u>	Stayed About <u>The Same</u>	DK <u>Ref.</u>
a.	The candidates running for the House and Senate	16	42	42	*=100
b.	Professional political consultants	36	32	31	1=100
c.	Political journalists	10	49	40	1=100

Q10. Have you ever helped elect a candidate who you were eventually sorry to see serve in office, or not?

44 Yes
56 No
0 Don't know/Refused
100

Q11. Turning now to the specifics of political campaigns, on a scale from 1 to 10, where 10 represents a factor that is most important to winning an election and 1 represents a factor that is least important to winning, where would you place (INSERT ITEM)? ... How about (INSERT ITEM)? ... (RANDOMIZE:)

		<u>1-4</u>	<u>5-7</u>	<u>8-10</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>	<i>Average Rating</i>
a.	The amount of money available to a campaign	1	25	74	0=100	8.3
b.	The quality of the candidate's message	1	17	82	0=100	8.5
c.	The candidate's abilities as a campaigner	2	52	46	0=100	7.3
d.	The partisan makeup of a state or House district	3	44	52	1=100	7.6

Q12. In your experience, generally which is the more serious problem for a campaign—a candidate with a weak message or a candidate who is a poor campaigner?

75 Weak message
22 Poor campaigner
2 Neither (VOL)
1 Don't know/Refused
100

Q13. Generally speaking, if you have enough campaign resources, how difficult is it to sell a mediocre candidate to voters? Is it very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult, or very difficult?

8 Very easy
34 Somewhat easy
48 Somewhat difficult
8 Very difficult
2 Don't know/Refused
100

Q14. And if you have enough campaign resources, how difficult is it to handle a candidate's unpopular stands on issues? Is it very easy, somewhat easy, somewhat difficult, or very difficult?

5	Very easy
32	Somewhat easy
56	Somewhat difficult
6	Very difficult
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q15. Now thinking about the role that candidates play in deciding campaign strategy, in what percentage of the campaigns you've worked on did the candidates play the leading role in deciding campaign strategy? (RECORD NUMBER)

22	Under 25%
21	25% to 49%
28	50% to 74%
27	75% or more
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

48.7% Average

Q16. In your experience, does the campaigning of an independent issue advocacy group ON BEHALF OF a candidate help or hinder his or her campaign?

65	Help
12	Hinder
19	Depends (VOL)
2	No effect (VOL)
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q17. To what extent do you think adwatches—that is, press coverage focusing on the accuracy of particular ads—have made campaigns more careful about the content of their ads? A great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or not at all?

24	Great deal
32	Fair amount
31	Not very much
12	Not at all
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q18. Thinking back to the 1996 election cycle, how many campaigns, if any, do you know of that used push polling—that is, disseminating false or misleading information about a candidate under the pretense of taking a poll? Would you say many, some, a few, or none?

8	Many
13	Some
48	A few
28	None
<u>3</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

THERE IS NO QUESTION 19.

Q20. I'd like your opinion on some possible problems that might keep the national political system from working as well as it should. First, what about (INSERT ITEM)? Do you think this is a major problem, somewhat of a problem, or not much of a problem? ...And how about (INSERT ITEM)?...(RANDOMIZE:)

		<u>Major Problem</u>	<u>Somewhat of a Problem</u>	<u>Not much of a Problem</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a.	Elected officials caring more about getting re-elected than doing what's best for the country	37	36	27	0=100
b.	Good people being discouraged from running for office by the amount of media attention given to candidates' personal lives	55	35	10	0=100
c.	Political contributions having too much influence on government policy	24	35	41	0=100
d.	A decline in moral and ethical standards among people in politics and government	14	32	52	2=100

Q21. How much trust and confidence do you have in the wisdom of the American people when it comes to making choices on election day? A great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or none at all?

		<i>---Government Leaders---</i>		
		<u>Congress</u>	<u>Pres. Appoint.</u>	<u>Civil Servants</u>
42	Great deal	64	34	34
42	Fair amount	31	51	44
12	Not very much	1	12	20
2	None at all	0	1	1
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused	<u>4</u>	<u>2</u>	<u>1</u>
100		100	100	100

Q22. What about on domestic policy issues? How much confidence do you have in the judgment of the American people about major domestic policy issues? A great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or none at all?

30 Great deal
 49 Fair amount
 18 Not very much
 2 None at all
1 Don't know/Refused
 100

Q23. In your opinion, how well INFORMED or poorly informed are voters about major policy issues? Very well informed, somewhat well informed, somewhat poorly informed, or very poorly informed?

2 Very well informed
 30 Somewhat well informed
 48 Somewhat poorly informed
 18 Very poorly informed
2 Don't know/Refused
 100

Q24. Now a few questions about the causes of voter cynicism. To what extent do you think (INSERT ITEM) causes voter cynicism? A great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or not at all? ... And to what extent do you think (INSERT ITEM) causes voter cynicism? ... (RANDOMIZE:)

	<u>Great Deal</u>	<u>Fair Amount</u>	<u>Not very Much</u>	<u>None At all</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. Negative campaigning	24	43	30	3	0=100
b. Politicians' poor performance while in office	27	46	26	0	1=100
c. The way the news media report on politics	63	28	7	2	*=100
d. The way money is raised in campaigns	25	36	32	6	1=100

Q25. As I read you some changes that have been proposed to reform the way political campaigns are financed, please tell me how you would rate each in terms of benefit to the country. First, how would you rate (INSERT ITEM)? Excellent, good, only fair, or poor? ... In terms of benefit to the country, how would you rate (INSERT ITEM)? ... (RANDOMIZE:)

	<u>Excellent</u>	<u>Good</u>	<u>Only Fair</u>	<u>Poor</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. Providing public financing to pay the costs of campaigns for candidates that accept spending limits	26	16	12	46	0=100
b. Providing free TV time to candidates	29	22	19	30	*=100
c. Ending soft money	16	17	34	33	*=100
d. Increasing individual contribution limits	38	27	14	20	1=100
e. Limiting spending by issue advocacy groups	14	14	23	47	2=100

Q26. How common are unethical practices in the political consulting business? Do unethical practices happen very often, sometimes, not very often, or rarely?

10	Very often
41	Sometimes
36	Not very often
12	Rarely
*	Never (VOL)
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q27. In your own words, what are the most common unethical campaign practices? (OPEN-ENDED. RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE. PROBE ONCE FOR CLARITY.)

51 CAMPAIGN PRACTICES (Net)

16	Distort/mislead/misrepresent issues or positions
13	Distortions about opponent
10	Lying/not telling the truth
6	False/irresponsible advertising
3	Distort own candidate's positions
3	Leaking false information
3	Releasing negative material late in campaign
2	Inflaming racial issues/playing "the race card"
2	Negative campaigning
*	Using unauthorized endorsements
*	Personal attacks
*	Attacking candidate's family

30 FUNDRAISING AND SPENDING TACTICS (Net)

17	Raising and not reporting money/skirting campaign finance rules
9	Getting kickbacks/"back door" deals
3	Too much consideration of contributors/"selling" positions
3	Improper coordination between candidates and independent groups
*	Funneling money

23 TREATMENT OF CANDIDATES/CLIENTS (Net)

12	Wasting money/overcharging clients/improper billing
3	Overselling your abilities/making promises can't keep
2	Encouraging candidates to do things not good for candidate, but good for consultant
2	Taking on clients with competing interests/working for different clients in same race
2	Telling candidates what they want to hear, not the truth
1	Taking on too many clients
1	Breaking confidence of a client/disloyalty to a client
1	Keeping candidates in races they can't win
1	Carrying on an agenda that is not the client's
*	Encouraging candidates to adopt positions they don't believe in
*	Poor campaign management
*	Stealing clients

13 POLLING TECHNIQUES (Net)

11	Push-polling
1	Releasing false/misleading poll results
1	Skewing the polls
*	Conducting unauthorized polls

3	Other mentions
4	Don't know/Refused

Q28. Please tell me whether, in your opinion, each of the following campaign practices is something you feel is acceptable, questionable, or clearly unethical. First, how about (INSERT ITEM)? In your opinion, is this acceptable, questionable, or clearly unethical? ... How about (INSERT ITEM)? ... (RANDOMIZE:)

		<u>Acceptable</u>	<u>Questionable</u>	<u>Clearly Unethical</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a.	Focusing primarily on criticism of the opponent	82	18	*	*=100
b.	Focusing primarily on the kind of person a candidate is, rather than on issues	72	25	1	2=100
c.	Making statements that are factually untrue	*	2	98	0=100
d.	Making statements that are factually true, but are taken out of context	13	60	26	1=100
e.	Using scare tactics about a candidate's issue positions	36	46	14	4=100
f.	Using push polls	7	20	70	3=100
g.	Trying to suppress voter turnout	22	29	46	3=100

Q29. In your opinion, is "going negative" an unethical campaign practice?

2	Yes
97	No
1	Depends (VOL)
<u>0</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Q30. In your own words, what does "going negative" mean?
(OPEN-ENDED. RECORD VERBATIM RESPONSE. PROBE ONCE FOR CLARITY.)

74	EMPHASIZING OPPONENT/CRITICIZING OPPONENT (Net)
41	Pointing out weaknesses in opponent/providing information about opponent
26	Pointing out opponent's positions
8	Emphasizing opponent's personal life
3	Running negative advertisements
3	Personal attacks/character assassination
3	Focus on character instead of issues
*	Characterizing opponent pejoratively
31	COMPARING AND CONTRASTING CANDIDATES
24	Comparing records of two candidates
4	Comparing opponent's record to constituency/voter concerns
1	Comparing opponent's words with actions
3	False information/lies or misrepresentations
1	Other
*	Don't know/Refused

Q31. Are campaigns today more likely to “go negative” than they were 10 years ago, less likely, or about as likely?

50 More likely
 2 Less likely
 46 About as likely
2 Don't know/Refused
 100

BASED ON THOSE WHO SAID "MORE LIKELY" IN Q.31 [N = 100]

Q32. Who is most responsible for this change? The candidates, their campaign consultants, the media, or the public? (IF RESPONDENT VOLUNTEERS MORE THAN ONE RESPONSE, PROBE: Who is MOST responsible?)

3 Candidates
 37 Campaign consultants
 15 The media
 24 The public
 15 All of the above (VOL)
 4 Other (VOL—RECORD)
2 Don't know/Refused
 100

Q33. Some consultants say that (INSERT ITEM). Do you completely agree, mostly agree, mostly disagree, or completely disagree? ... How about that (INSERT ITEM)? ... (RANDOMIZE:)

		Completely <u>Agree</u>	Mostly <u>Agree</u>	Mostly <u>Disagree</u>	Completely <u>Disagree</u>	DK/ <u>Ref.</u>
a.	Voters respond more to negatives than positives	31	52	14	2	1=100
b.	The news media pay more attention to negatives than positives	64	34	2	0	0=100

Q34. In the typical campaign that goes negative, is it more likely that the candidate or his or her staff will tell the consultants to “go negative” OR that the consultants will make that recommendation to the candidate?

2 Candidate or his or her staff will tell consultants
 81 Consultants will recommend to candidate
 16 Neither more likely (VOL)
1 Don't know/Refused
 100

Q35. On another subject, are you a member of the American Association of Political Consultants?

51 Yes
 48 No
1 Don't know/Refused
 100

Q36. Do you think there should or should not be a code of ethics for professionals who work on campaigns? (**IF ANSWERS** "Already is one," **ASK:** Do you think there should or should not be a code of ethics?)

81	Should
12	Should not
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

IF RESPONDENT DOES NOT ANSWER "ALREADY IS ONE" IN Q.36, ASK: [N = 185]

Q37. As you may know, the American Association of Political Consultants, or AAPC, does have a code of ethics. Do you happen to be familiar with this code?

61	Yes
39	No
<u>0</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

IF RESPONDENT IS FAMILIAR WITH CODE OF ETHICS (Q.36 = 2 OR Q.37 = 1), ASK: [N = 128]

Q38. How much of an effect do you think this code has on the behavior of your peers? A great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or none at all?

0	Great deal
12	Fair amount
45	Not very much
36	None at all
<u>7</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

IF RESPONDENT IS FAMILIAR WITH CODE OF ETHICS (Q.36 = 2 OR Q.37 = 1), ASK: [N = 128]

Q39. And how much effect does this code have on your own behavior? A great deal, a fair amount, not very much, or none at all?

19	Great deal
25	Fair amount
22	Not very much
32	None at all
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

**IF RESPONDENT ANSWERS THERE "SHOULD" BE A CODE OF ETHICS (Q.36 OR Q.36A), ASK:
[N = 163]**

Q40. Should a professional organization be able to censure those who violate a code of ethics for campaign professionals, or not?

68	Yes
22	No
<u>10</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

Finally, I'd like to ask you a few background questions.

D1. Enter respondent's sex:

82	Male
<u>18</u>	Female
100	

D2. Have you ever (INSERT ITEM)? ... How about (INSERT ITEM)? ...

	<u>Yes</u>	<u>No</u>	<u>DK/Ref.</u>
a. worked in the office of a federal, state, or local elected official	54	46	0=100
b. worked for a national, state, or local political party or party committee	62	38	0=100
c. worked in government	54	46	0=100
d. worked for a news media organization	30	70	0=100

D3. Over the past two-year period, that is since 1996, about what percentage of your professional income has come from candidate or political-issue consulting as opposed to corporate work? (RECORD NUMBER.)

6	Under 25%
18	25% to 49%
25	50% to 74%
51	75% or more
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

D4. What is your age? (RECORD AGE)

7	18-29
31	30-39
40	40-49
19	50-59
2	60 +
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

D5. What is the last grade or class that you completed in school? (DO NOT READ)

0	High school graduate (Grade 12), equivalent, or less
0	Technical, trade, or business school after high school
6	Some college (no four-year degree)
42	Four-year college degree (B.A., B.S.)
12	Some graduate school (no graduate degree)
26	Master's degree (M.A., M.S.)
6	Law degree (J.D.)
8	Ph.D. (doctorate)
<u>0</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

D6. Are you of Hispanic or Latino descent, such as Mexican, Puerto Rican, Cuban, or some other Spanish background?

2	Yes
97	No
<u>1</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

D7. (IF NOT HISPANIC:) What is your race? Are you white, black, Asian, or some other race?
(IF HISPANIC:) What is your race? Are you white Hispanic, black Hispanic, or some other race?

98	White
0	Black
*	Asian
2	Other or mixed race (RECORD)
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

D8. What is your religious preference? Protestant, Roman Catholic, Jewish, Mormon, or an orthodox church such as the Greek or Russian Orthodox Church?

37	Protestant (Baptist, Christian, Episcopal, Jehovah's Witness, Lutheran, Methodist, Presbyterian)
23	Roman Catholic
12	Jewish
1	Mormon (include Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints)
2	Orthodox Church (Greek or Russian)
0	Islam/Muslim
1	Other (RECORD)
22	No religion/Atheist
<u>2</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

D9. (IF NOT JEWISH, ISLAM/MUSLIM, NO RELIGION/ATHEIST:) Would you describe yourself as a “born again” or evangelical Christian, or not?

10	Yes
56	No
1	Don't know/Refused
<u>33</u>	NOT ASKED
100	

D10. In politics today, do you consider yourself a Republican, Democrat, or Independent?

40	Republican
58	Democrat
2	Independent
*	No preference (VOL)
*	Other (VOL)
<u>0</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

D11. In general, would you describe your political views as very conservative, conservative, moderate, liberal, or very liberal?

7	Very conservative
26	Conservative
28	Moderate
26	Liberal
12	Very liberal
1	Other (VOL)
<u>*</u>	Don't know/Refused
100	

D12. Thinking about your total family income in both 1996 and 1997, if you were to AVERAGE the total across these two years, what was your annual family income from all sources before taxes? Just stop me when I get to the right category. (READ)

0	Less than \$30,000
6	\$30,000 to under \$50,000
16	\$50,000 to under \$100,000
20	\$100,000 to under \$150,000
20	\$150,000 to under \$200,000
17	\$200,000 to under \$300,000
9	\$300,000 to under \$500,000
6	\$500,000 or more
<u>6</u>	Don't know/Refused (DO NOT READ)
100	