

A Plan for the Florida Democratic Party

Rebrand, Rebuild, Recruit

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Executive Summary

Over the last two years I have participated in discussions around our state about a vision and a plan to rebrand, rebuild and recruit for a more inclusive Florida Democratic Party, a party ready to compete and win in every county.

November 6th was our party's first step forward! We have a lot of work to do in our state to build up from these accomplishments.

Our party is strong and successful when we engage and empower our grassroots support and engage neighbor to neighbor. Whether we are in a small county or large, our party is strong and successful when we grow a backbone and stand unified behind common principles and values that bind us! Standing up for what we believe, fighting in every county, we will work night and day to target our voters in order to elect democrats in every level of government, in 2014 we will defeat Rick Scott.

To win we must rebrand, rebuild and recruit.

There is never a 'down' day in politics, change must start now. Complacency and the status quo are no longer an option.

November 2, 2010 left us disappointed, disheartened and dismayed. For the last two years, every unemployed worker, every woman, every child, everyone except republican-backed special interest, shared those same feelings; the same pain. November 6th showed us we could win. Now is the time for Florida Democrats who respect diversity, value justice, and support the core principles of the Democratic Party to stand united behind the rebuilding and rejuvenation of the Florida Democratic Party. It is our party that will provide hope and an alternative to the party of 'no we can't' and move Florida Forward.

To sustain the momentum it is clear to me the Florida Democratic Party must:

- ✓ Rebrand
- ✓ Rebuild
- ✓ Recruit

As a lifelong Democrat and party leader, I am firmly committed to our party and our shared values. I am committed to building on this year's electoral successes. But we can't be complacent. We celebrated our victory on November 6th, but we must now work even harder to grow the organization and commitment for real change in Florida. I'll never forget how shell-shocked I was by the devastating losses in 2010, we can never let that happen again.

For the last two years I have actively conversed with Democrats across our state. We spoke about what happened in 2010 and in 2012 and about the past and future role of the Florida Democratic Party. The discussion evolved into what I could do to help our party rebrand, rebuild and recruit our bench.

The Florida Democratic Party has never and will never be about any one individual, it is about what is best for our Party and our state.

The Florida Democratic Party needs an individual that is fully committed to taking the reins as a fulltime chair. Republicans aren't working part-time on their attack plan, and neither should we. We need a leader with the energy and drive to give it everything they've got, seven days a week, 365 days a year. We need a Party Chair ready, willing and able to provide the leadership to **rebrand, rebuild and recruit** for our future.

No excuses, 2014 started when the polls closed November 6th.

Rebrand

Reclaim Our Message

The processing of subconscious messaging is completely non-analytical. Republicans long ago recognized this and built aggressive campaigns to tap into individuals' subconscious thoughts. Their messaging bombards us on television, radio, print and the Internet. By the time a voter goes to the poll, these images and thoughts have been planted into their subconscious. They are the driving force behind why a voter will vote for a clearly inferior candidate who does not respect or represent their own interest. They plant thoughts to control voters' attitudes and perceptions of our candidates and issues, and these perceptions and attitudes become viral in social groups.

The Florida Democratic Party must develop a clear, easy to understand message and consistently deliver this message at every level. We need to ensure our grassroots army is onboard; they need to understand the message and how to deliver it.

Motivation, reinforcement, retention, and transference are widely believed to be the key motivating elements of adult learning. Republicans have monopolized the art of exploiting these elements.

- Motivation – Effective organizations provide motivation by tapping into self-interest. The Democratic Party must show a clear connection between what our Party stands for and the values of the voter. Motivation is personal and the message must be personal.
- Reinforcement – We must recognize voters do not develop their political ideals from any one source. Effective reinforcement utilizes social clubs, identifiable and distinct communities, social networks with shared values, churches and other community organizations. Secondary to the above is the cross media platforms used to reinforce the message; television, Internet, radio, print media, direct mail, pundits. We must reach our voters first on the ground in their neighborhoods. Once the personal connection is made we reinforce the message over the air and in the mailbox.
- Retention – Retention is directly related to how well the message is originally developed, delivered and its subsequent reinforcement; the message must be repeated and reinforced over and over again.
- Transference—Republicans practice the art of transference. Nowhere is this

more evident than the attacks waged against the President's healthcare reform. The republicans recognized the components of the healthcare reform legislation were individually popular and well received. To score political points and undermine the President and Congress they undertook a massive transference campaign. They reframed the debate, it was no longer about expanding healthcare coverage to over 32 million Americans without healthcare, eliminating pre-existing coverage exclusions, or Insurance reform. They made the debate about big government, government take over, and higher taxes. We must recognize when the transference debate begins and aggressively counter their attempts. Our President rebranded the Republican's use of the term "Obama Care" when he took ownership and took their power of the word away.

The Republican Party has learned how to control how a voter feels without them knowing why. They hate, don't like, or reject the idea, person or party based on non-analytical thinking. The Florida Democratic Party must recognize this reality and make appropriate strategic adjustments.

Democratic Messaging

Length; if Apple can do it, we can too.

- Voters will not read lengthy documents or paragraphs. If they can't skim it in seconds it will end up in the trash.
- Advertisers pack an entire persuasive sell into 30-second commercials. We only have 50 to 80 words to persuade a voter.

Reiteration, three times is a charm.

- Messages resonate when they are repeated. One of the best techniques is repetition of our message within our party and candidates. Reiteration is most often used by educators, advertisers and our opposition.

Composition, Move Florida Forward!

- Our word use and arrangements must paint a picture for our new and sporadic voters, otherwise known as our persuadable audience.
- While they might not fully explain or intellectualize our positions, utilizing phrases, bullets and catchwords are the most effective tools to achieve our goals.

Keep it positive; strength, power, and passion.

- There are many individuals including Loranne Ausley, George Lakoff, Frank

Luntz and Drew Westen who have worked on messaging and word use. We don't have to reinvent the wheel. We just need to embrace the concept of loaded words that invoke strong emotional associations and responses from our targeted audience.

- Democrats must tap into the emotional aspects of political affiliations and give people reason/permission to vote for our party's candidates.

"We believe that everyone should have a fair and equal opportunity in a future that, with hard work, will bring them closer to the American dream. The Florida Democratic Party continues to champion efforts to strengthen our economy, improve our public schools, expand affordable access to medical care, honor our eldest citizens, and lead the way to guarantee all people their civil rights".

Respect our Base

We should never take our Democratic base for granted. We must recognize the influence and importance the Black and Hispanic communities play in the success of our party. However, our party is an inclusive party and we need to nurture and include our supporters. No one wants to be ignored or taken for granted.

- Our Black Community
- Our Hispanic Community
- Women
- Our hard working Labor Brothers and Sisters
- Our Senior citizens
- The Youth in our community, our future
- The Disabled Floridians
- The men and women that served our country in uniform
- The diverse GLBT community

When we reach out to our core constituency groups we win. Every member of our base should be valued and reminded that we are the party that represents their interests. When we lose any one of these groups, we lose, simple as that.

Rebuild

Bottom up

Change is never easy and individuals who benefit from the status quo will always fight change. To change the overall trajectory in Florida we have put everything on the table. We have to push aside the special interest who have a strangle hold on Tallahassee and focus on what must be done to win elections from the school house to the state house.

The Florida Democratic Party must change our ground game and become a bottom up organization. We must work to engage and keep our 2012 grassroots support and we must use the grassroots as a political force. Without this, our party will once again start a slide towards irrelevance. We will:

- Enable our passionate supporters and let them get the job done.
- Hire local, local parties must be empowered to hire local organizers who know their communities best.
- Manage and redirect resources and attention to support our grassroots foundation.
- Local parties must work with our core Democratic constituencies to pave a new independent road that promotes the Democratic Party and our candidates.

The days of “we know what’s best for you” are over!

Campaign 365

The Florida Democratic Party and Democratic candidates can no longer afford to wait until 6 months prior to an election to prepare for an election. There is never a ‘down time’ in politics. We take a day off and the Republicans pass us by. The concept of a coordinated campaign is sound; our past execution has been flawed. 2012 and OFA demonstrated to win, we must maintain a year round ground game.

We will establish a full time electoral organization committee ‘Campaign 365’. The committee would consist of:

- Five to seven regional coordinators
- The FDP executive director
- The finance board chairman

- A member appointed by the Democratic State House Majority/Minority Leader
- A member appointed by the Democratic State Senate Majority/Minority Leader
- A member appointed by the Congressional caucus
- A member appointed by the Black Caucus
- A member appointed by the Hispanic Caucus
- A member appointed by the LGBT Caucus
- A member appointed by Organized Labor
- Two members appointed by the Florida Democratic Party Chair representing donors
- Other members appointed by the Florida Democratic Party Chair representing statewide campaigns or other constituency groups

The Campaign 365 board would formulate strategic plans to implement the election goals outlined by the Florida Democratic Party. The committee will develop and submit an annual budget and assist the finance board by fundraising.

Decentralize

The party will decentralize by creating five to seven regional hubs to coordinate our expanded grassroots outreach

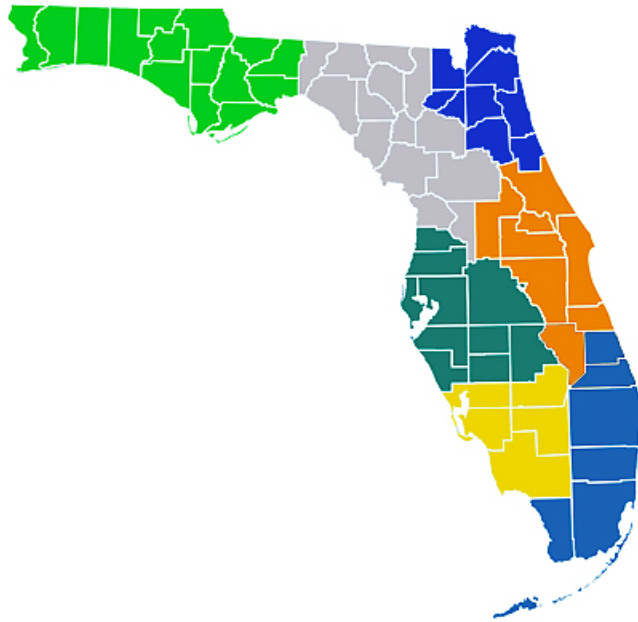
We will establish regional hubs led by regional coordinators recruited from each geographical area. The regional hub coordinator would provide the support and coordination needed between various internal and external organizations. The coordinators would be facilitators and a resource to local party leaders. The regional coordinators will:

- Set priorities
- Manage daily field activities
- Make ground level strategic decisions
- Implement candidate ground games
- Serve as the central point of contact for communication

Successful regional coordinators will work with local and state leadership as well as candidates to build a consensus amongst stakeholders and interested parties.

Florida Democratic Party Regional Hub Model*

- Southeast
- Southwest
- Tampa Bay
- Central Florida
- Northeast
- North Central
- Panhandle



* Regions are depicted for illustration purposes only and do not necessarily reflect the final hub model.

Support the field

- Change the Florida Democratic Party staff culture.
- It's not what the field can do for the party.
- When counties and activist call the party they must hear "what do you need from us to be successful."

67 County Strategy

The Democratic National Committee has a 50 state strategy to achieve long-term success in our national party. OFA demonstrated a strong 67 county strategy that mobilized volunteers, registered voters and opened field offices in every corner of the state. The Florida Democratic Party must learn from these successes and implement a real 67 county strategy. From Escambia County in the north to the tip of the southernmost point in Monroe County, Democrats must compete for partisan and non-partisan positions.

We will not enjoy statewide success unless we recognize that a vote in Madison County is just as powerful as a vote in Miami-Dade. That lost vote in Putnam County

for the school board member or tax collector candidate erodes our ability to win statewide elections. We cannot leave tens of thousands of votes in our northern counties on the table. We must aggressively turn the electorate on and then turn them out. A real 67 county strategy also means we cannot take our core Democrat base for granted. We cannot ignore our Democratic strongholds, when voters in Palm Beach, Broward and Miami-Dade turn out we win. Our candidates and our party will work with these county leaders to help turn Florida Blue.

Finance Development Board

The success of rebranding and rebuilding the Florida Democratic Party will hinge on an aggressive fundraising strategy. We will have a successful organized fundraising campaign structured with an expanded, predictable and diversified income stream.

With the significant statewide losses during past election cycles, we experienced significant financial pressure on our ability to raise money. But now is not the time to back away from an aggressive strategy to increase and diversify our funding. We will mount an aggressive grassroots small donor mobilization, direct mail campaigns and engage our traditional allies.

Over the last five years we have seen a significant change in how we use technology. During the 2008 and again in the 2012 Presidential campaign the President's team demonstrated significant success in their online fundraising capabilities. This success cannot be ignored, while there has been some improvements over the last two years, the Florida Democratic Party has not kept up with this cultural shift. The growing financial needs of the party and the basics of fundraising have not changed. Online or person-to-person fundraising is dependent on trust and personal relationships.

The Florida Democratic Party is not entitled to political or financial support. We must earn respect and support from organizations and key individuals. To earn respect we need to demonstrate the Florida Democratic Party is:

- A highly organized and functional party with a clear mission and goal
- Led by leaders with integrity
- A fiscally conservative watchdog that ensures every dollar spent is directly related to electing our Democratic team
- A new party, reorganized to compete for the future leadership of Florida

Highly successful organizational fundraising campaigns are structured, goal oriented, and led by individuals with a personal commitment to the organization. Only after we send a clear message we are ready to retool to wage a successful campaign, will our outreach to donors be successful.

The Florida Democratic Party must establish a Finance Development Board to expand and diversify the organizational income stream. No highly effective organization dependent on the generosity of others can truly succeed without a diversified finance board ready, willing and able to provide leadership.

The board should consist of party leaders, business leaders, community leaders and financially independent individuals capable and willing to ask their peers for donations.

A finance chairman would lead the Finance Development Board. The chairman would work with subject matter experts to reach consensus on a model that defines the roles and responsibilities of each member of the board. The chairman would provide organizational leadership to organize and manage the party's fundraising efforts and messaging. The chairman will work closely with Florida Democratic Party media staff to develop an aggressive online fundraising program.

To rebuild the Florida Democratic Party we must first understand and accept status quo is not an option. We must understand the anger and fear expressed by the voters in 2010 still exists. November 6th demonstrated it was not a rejection of our core values or candidates, it was a rejection of how we communicated through our political strategy and messaging.

We must win the hearts and minds of voters.

We will not neglect our base.

We will aggressively target new and sporadic voters.

The republicans have spent the last three decades years attacking our party leaders, diverting attention away from their failed policies and suppressing voter turnout.

Vote by Mail Program

This is an area I am happy to report our party has made tremendous gains in but we have to maintain our forward momentum. We must provide the leadership and resources to support an aggressive field vote by mail registration program.

- Train local activists to target Democratic-rich neighborhoods, colleges, universities, and community organizations for vote by mail recruitment.
- Train local activists to utilize technology to sign up Democratic voters for their county vote by mail program.
- Capture contact data for individuals signed up to vote by mail.

It's All About the Ground Game

We must utilize our talented Democratic base to run a seven days per week, 365 days a year political war. We cannot let up on the extremists who now control our state.

Republicans holding both partisan and non-partisan offices should be held publicly accountable for their actions. Their every action should be scrutinized and then they should be called out and held accountable for their votes and behavior. No political party, journalist or private eye hammers away at a misbehaving Republican better or faster than Democratic grassroots activists spread out across our state.

By rebuilding our grassroots we build an army that will challenge extreme talk radio, publish letters to the editor on positions that motivate voters, connect with the public and develop a speakers bureau, and trained speakers to be local subject matter experts on everything Democratic Party.

Recruit

Build a Farm Team

Recruit, recruit, recruit! You cannot say that loud enough or often enough. The Democratic Party at every level must have an aggressive candidate recruitment plan. Instead of going back to the same pool over and over we must look towards:

- Business leaders
- Churches
- Community volunteers
- Colleges and Universities
- Community organizations such as PTAs, Girl and Boy Scout leaders, and active homeowners associations

These organizations are filled with quality Democrats capable of entering into a local entry-level race. We need to expand our search and provide the support for the candidates that will be our party's leaders in ten years.

We must build a farm team bench to ensure our viability and future success. You don't build a house from the top down. You start by laying a strong foundation that will support the structure as it grows. High visibility, high profile elections attract a lot of attention. But if we continue to neglect our political entry-level positions we will never enjoy statewide success.

We will never move towards regaining our Democratic majority by standing on the shoulders of republican school boards, city councils, county commissions and mayors. Every DEC must have an aggressive strategy to identify quality candidates who possess the skills and abilities along with the drive and ambition needed to move up to higher political office.

Candidate recruitment must happen in all 67 counties. There are Democrats in all 67 counties and there are partisan and non-partisan elections where neighborhood Democrats can compete. Today's small county successes are tomorrow's statewide victories.

Training

"Nuts and Bolts." No organization can thrive without training and neither can we. We can recruit the brightest up-and-coming political stars but where do they start?

We will provide comprehensive candidate and manager training to our farm team. A win on Election Day goes to a team better trained and prepared.

We will teach our candidates and volunteers:

- Fundraising strategies
- Basic campaign structure roles and responsibilities
- Budgeting
- Writing a campaign plan
- Messaging and delivery
- Communication tools and social media
- Targeting the electorate

Candidates run and win their own election, but we can provide the training to arm our team for victory.

Appendix

Resume

Alan Clendenin

Candidate, Florida Democratic Party Chair

PROFILE

Born in Sanford, Florida and attended public schools in Sanford, Oviedo, and Orlando, FL. Father of a son and a daughter, lifelong Democrat, activist and volunteer. Began Democratic activism in 1975 as a young Democrat in high school as a volunteer for President Jimmy Carter's presidential campaign. Since 1975 have continued to be actively involved in numerous local, state and national campaigns.

A pro-labor Democrat that spent years as a local, regional and national labor leader for NATCA an AFL-CIO affiliated union. A union leader in recruiting, developing and training a national network of campaign and political activist. Led political agenda driven campaigns and a leader in fighting Republican attacks on: contracting union jobs, employee benefits, health care and social security.

An air traffic control professional with 30 years of technical and management experience.

A leader who coaches staff to achieve organizational excellence.

Chair of the Florida Democratic Party Platform Committee responsible for creating a team of 27 Democrats who successfully drafted the Florida Democratic Party's 2012 state party platform.

POLITICAL EXPERIENCE

- Chair, Florida Democratic Party Platform Committee
- Florida Democratic Party Campaign Committee
- Florida Democratic Party Rules and By-Laws Committee
- Florida Democratic Party Finance Committee
- Democratic National Committee Member
- Hillsborough County State Committeeman
- Delegate, 2004, 2008 and 2012 Democratic National Conventions
- Rules Committee Member 2000 Democratic National Convention
- Hillsborough County Democratic Precinct Committeeman
- Numerous grassroots political campaigns

LABOR EXPERIENCE

- Local, Regional and National union representative
- Union organizer and Charter member of NATCA, AFL-CIO
- Trained Arbitrator and Advocate
- National Chair of the NATCA, AFL-CIO National Legislative Committee. Established and developed legislative policy, regional grassroots training programs, and media campaigns.
- Fundraiser

PROFESSIONAL EXPERIENCE

- Walt Disney World
- Sun Bank and First Bank of Denver
- Federal Aviation Administration (FAA)
- Air Traffic Management, Sarasota, Tampa, and St. Pete-Clearwater Control Towers
- Air Traffic Control, Anchorage, Rochester, Elmira, Orlando, St. Pete-Clearwater, and Tampa
- Pinellas County Noise Task Force

EDUCATION & TRAINING

- Valencia Community College
Orlando, FL
- University of Colorado
Boulder, CO