Why Don’t More Women Run?

Political Ambition, Women, and Local Government

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5 WOMEN Who would be good elected officials
What percentage of Wisconsin county board supervisors are women?
19% of County Board Officials are Women
19% COUNTY BOARD
23% CITY COUNCIL
40% SCHOOL BOARD
Change Between 2005 -- 2015

- County Board
- City Council: +3%
- School Board: +3%
Year of Parity

- County Board: ---
- City Council: 2105
- School Board: 2047
EXISTING RESEARCH
Women win elections at the **same rate** as men.
Why don’t women run?
CURRENT

1,609 surveys sent
592 responses
37% response rate

Local elected officials
Survey #2

POTENTIAL Local elected officials

5 Men 5 Women 5 Leaders
Survey #2

POTENTIAL Local elected officials
POTENTIAL

Local elected officials

38 counties

353 surveys sent

241 responses

56% response rate
BARRIERS

What might be some barriers to running?
Top 10 Barriers for Potential Local Elected Officials (PLEO)

1. Time away from family or home responsibilities: 57%
2. Lack interest or willingness to ask for campaign funds: 58%
3. Time away from work responsibilities: 51%
4. Concern about the impact on my finances: 35%
5. Time away from other activities I enjoy: 53%
6. Spouse, partner or family being subjected to criticism from constituents: 29%
7. Negative political atmosphere in local government: 38%
8. I lack interest/willingness to meet voters door-to-door: 41%
9. Negative political atmosphere in local government: 9%
10. Lack interest or willingness to ask for campaign funds: 6%

Current Supervisors: Green
Potentials: Blue
Amount of Household Chores

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Current</th>
<th>Potential</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 to 20 Hours</td>
<td>20 Hours or More</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Work Outside the Home

Current

0 to 20 Hours

Potential

20 Hours or More
DIFFERENCES Between Women and Men PLEOs on Significance of Barriers

1. I don't want to run against the incumbent
2. Negative political atmosphere on local government
3. Concern about making decisions in public
4. Concern about being a new model
5. Concern about failure/losing the election
6. Lack interest or willingness to work for local office
7. Lack interest or willingness to speak in public
8. Don't think I could make a positive difference
9. Don't think I'd use a good job in elected office
10. My knowledge of local government
11. My knowledge of local issues
12. Time away from work responsibilities
13. Time away from family responsibilities
14. Concern about criticism from constituents
15. Concern about the impact on my personal health
16. Concern about the impact on my finances
17. My personal health
18. My personal income
19. I am concerned about my "otherness" such as being a new model
20. My understanding of the rules of local government

Women: 18%
Men: 15%

Women: 14%
Men: 14%

Women: 13%
Men: 13%

Women: 12%
Men: 11%

Women: 10%
Men: 10%

Women: 6%
Men: 6%

Women: 5%
Men: 5%

Women: 5%
Men: 4%

Women: 4%
Men: 4%

Women: 3%
Men: 3%

Women: 2%
Men: 2%

Women: 1%
Men: 1%

Women: 1%
Men: 1%
CONCERNS ABOUT CRITICISM

HESITANT TO RUN AGAINST AN INCUMBENT

FEAR OF FAILURE & LOSING

CONCERNS ABOUT MAKING DECISIONS IN PUBLIC

NEGATIVE GENDER BIAS

UNCERTAIN ABOUT DOING A GOOD JOB
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Reason</th>
<th>Male Potentials</th>
<th>Female Potentials</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I am concerned about race or ethnicity bias against me</td>
<td>2.40%</td>
<td>3.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don’t think I would do a good job in elected office</td>
<td>3.60%</td>
<td>8.40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am concerned about my &quot;otherness,&quot; such as being a new resident,</td>
<td>1.20%</td>
<td>14.20%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>English as a second language, of a different religion, etc.</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am concerned about gender bias against me</td>
<td>1.20%</td>
<td>15.10%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have concerns about making decisions in public</td>
<td>4.70%</td>
<td>18.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have a fear of failure/ losing the election</td>
<td>8.20%</td>
<td>19.70%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I don't want to run against the incumbent</td>
<td>5.90%</td>
<td>23.90%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have concerns about reprisals or criticism</td>
<td></td>
<td>30.80%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Barriers with Statistically Significant Differences Between Female and Male Potential Local Elected Officials
### Percent of Respondents that Indicated that they had the Following Abilities or Experiences

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Experience</th>
<th>Supervisors</th>
<th>Potential LEOs</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>I have organized an event for a large group</td>
<td>34%</td>
<td>42%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have served on the board of a non-profit organization or foundation</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have run an organization, business or foundation</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>43%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I know many people in the community</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have interacted with elected officials as part of my job</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have attended local government meetings</td>
<td>38%</td>
<td>46%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have solicited funds for an organization, interest group or cause</td>
<td>39%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have participated in a leadership development program</td>
<td>42%</td>
<td>47%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I interact with elected officials socially</td>
<td>45%</td>
<td>48%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I am informed about local public policy issues</td>
<td>36%</td>
<td>45%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have served on an appointed local government committee, commission or board</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have worked or volunteered for a candidate</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>52%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have attended a state legislative committee meeting or floor session</td>
<td>50%</td>
<td>54%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have an elected official as a family member or friend</td>
<td>51%</td>
<td>56%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>I have organized an event for a large group</td>
<td>48%</td>
<td>57%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* Asterisk indicates experiences that are often indicative of leadership potential.
Are you **qualified** to serve in local elected office?

60%  

71%
ENCOURAGEMENT

How would you encourage them to run?
1. INFORMED ON LOCAL ISSUES
2. KNOWING MANY COMMUNITY MEMBERS
ATTENDING LOCAL GOV. MEETINGS
PUBLIC SPEAKING EXPERIENCE
5. LEADING AN ORGANIZATION OR BUSINESS
What are the barriers to running for local elected office?
WHAT'S NEXT?