



**CONSENSUS**  
— COMMUNICATIONS —

Florida Association of Counties

**WAR ROOM**

# The Story

# Significant Objects

"When people are finding meaning in things – **beware.**"

- Edward Gorey





# Significant Objects

**Step One** | Buy \$129 of thrift-store trinkets.

**Step Two** | Hire talented writers to create stories for each object.

**Step Three** | Resell.

**Step One** | Determine if good stories raise the *subjective* value of items that are *objectively* almost worthless.

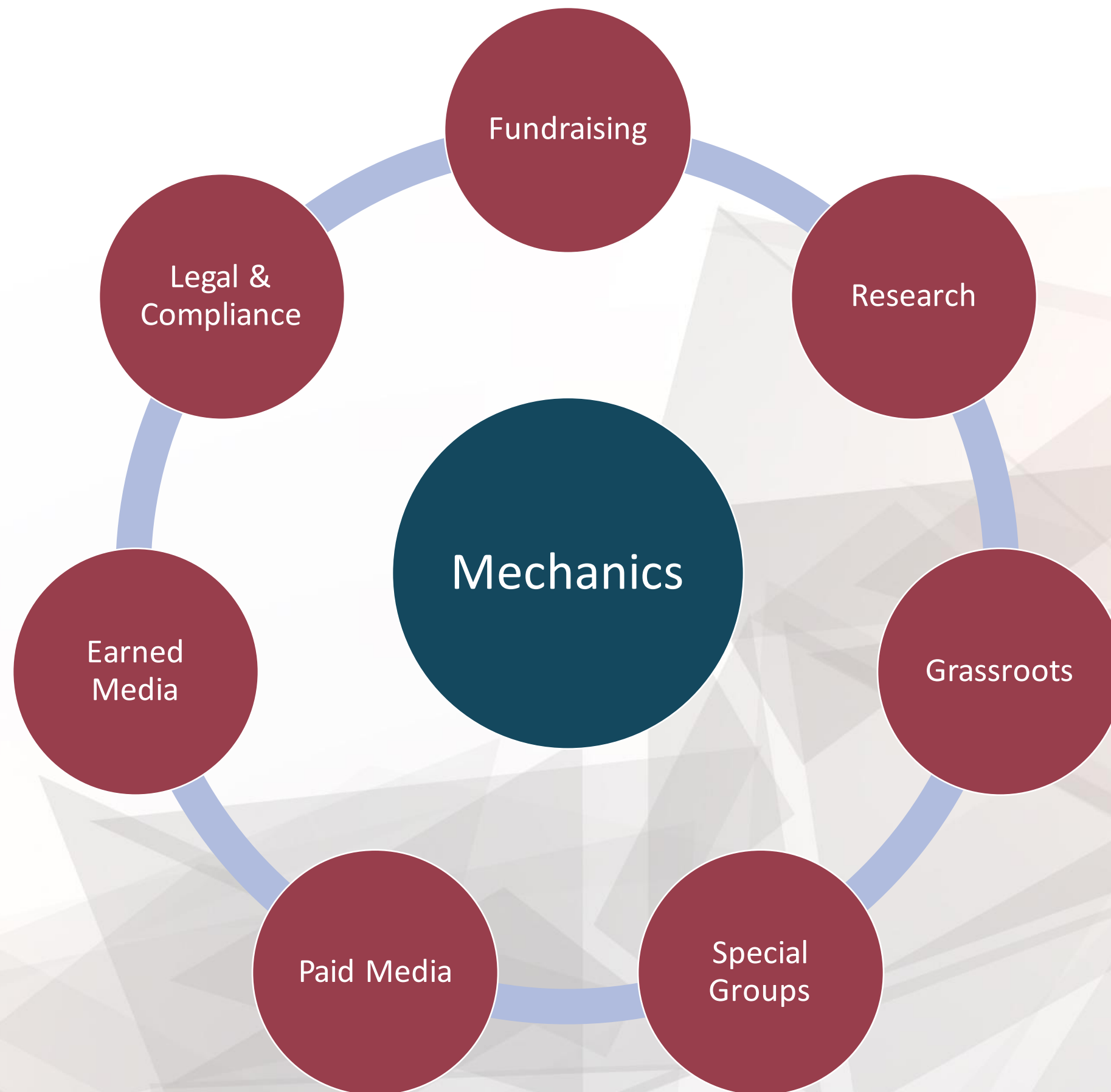


# Significant Objects

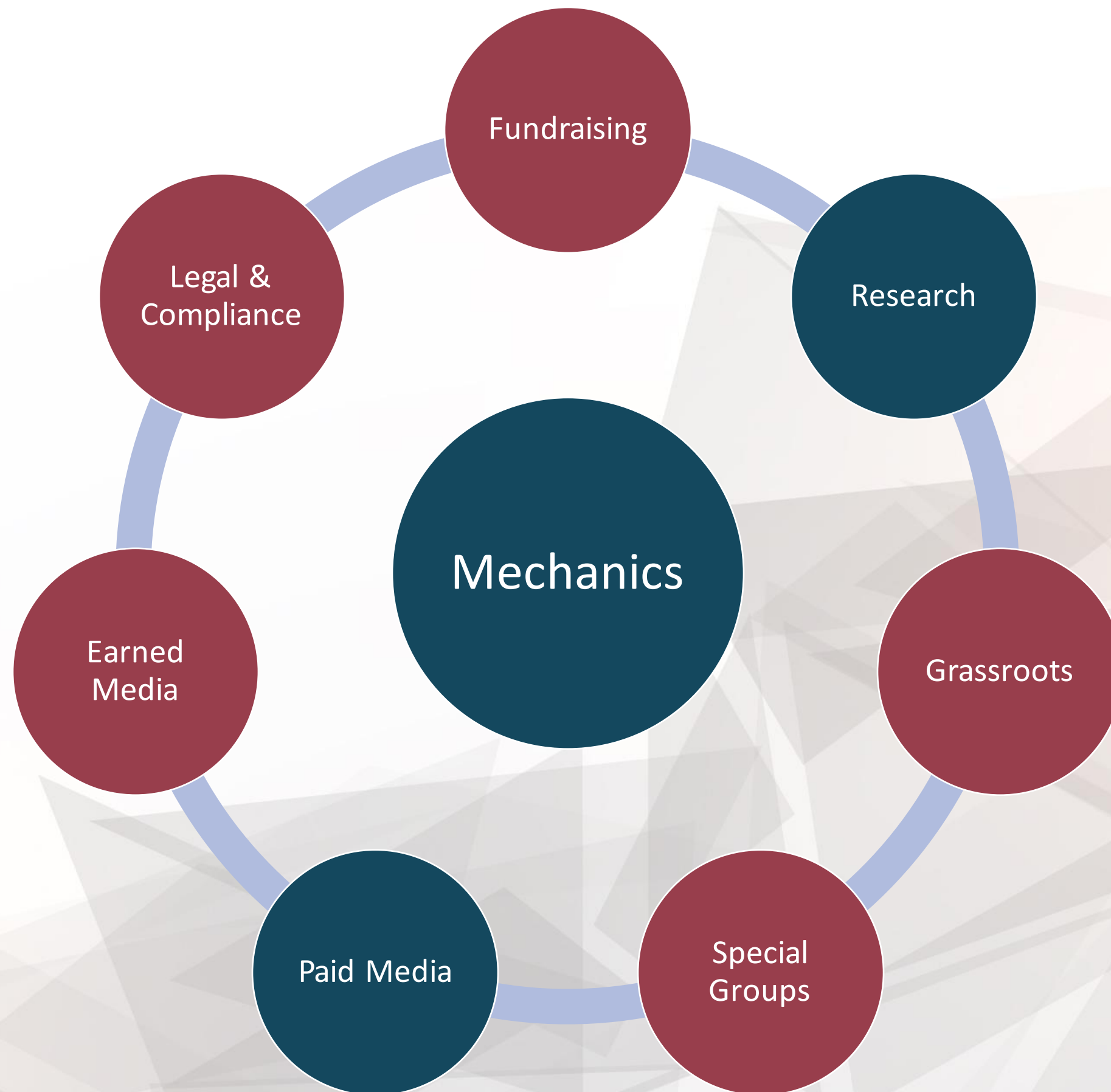
“The human mind is a  
**story processor**, not a  
logic processor.”

Jonathan Haidt, PhD  
Social Psychologist  
New York University

# The Mechanics











Broadcast (TV)

Cable (TV)

Over the Top (OTT)  
(e.g. Hulu, Roku, etc.)

Satellite / Dish



Direct Mail



Digital Ads

Social Media Ads

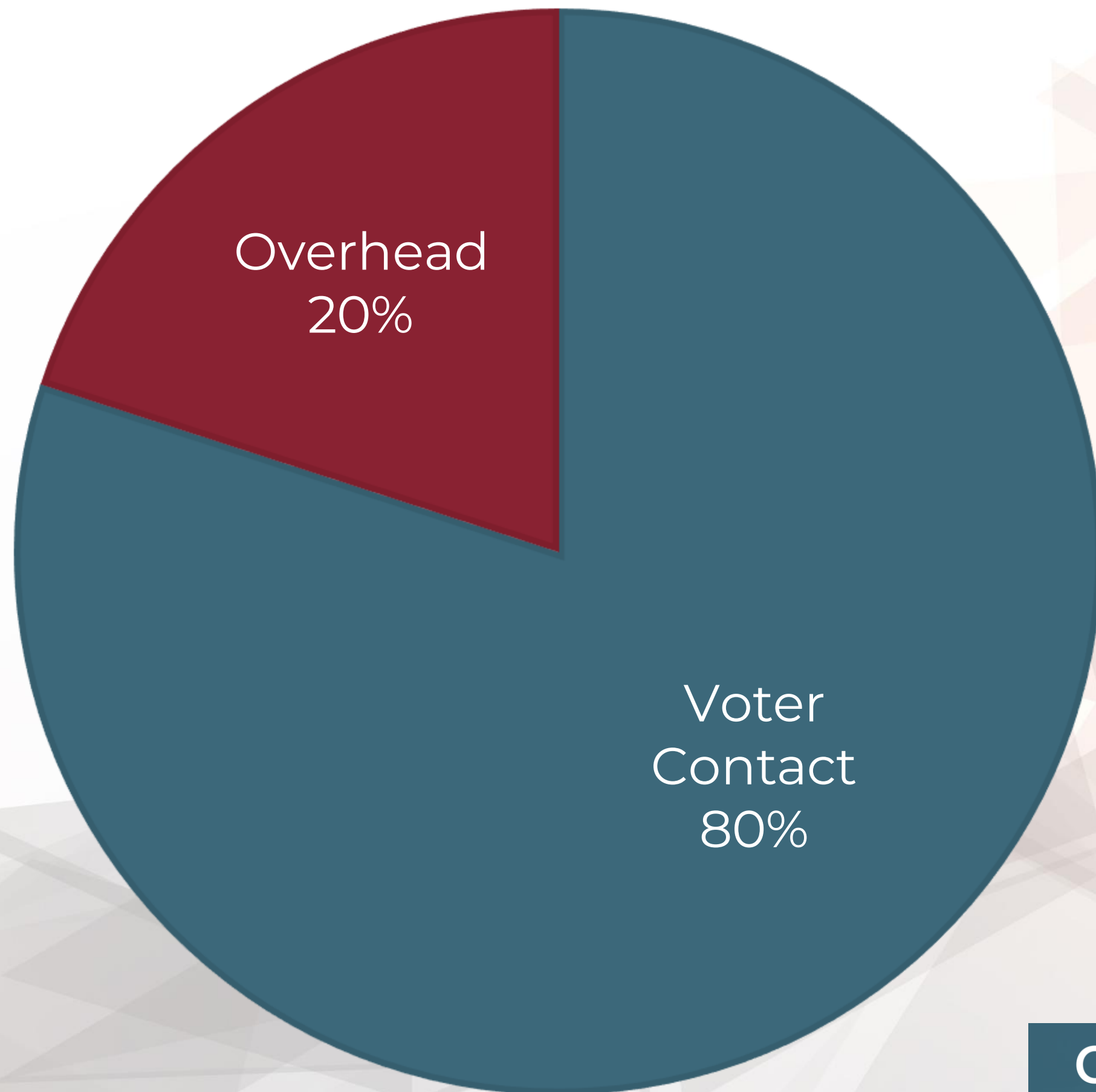


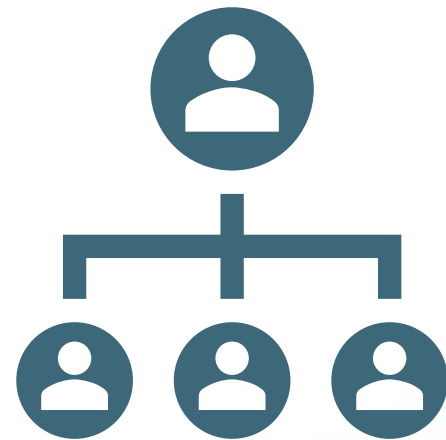
Radio Ads

Broadcast

Streaming

## Campaign Budget





General Consultant

Commission on Buy:  
3 – 4 %

Retainer  
(\$5k - \$7.5/month)

OPT: Modest  
Markup on other  
Media

OPT: Win Bonus



Campaign  
Manager

Salary

OPT: Win Bonus



Fundraiser

Modest Retainer +  
5-10%



Other Staff

Salary



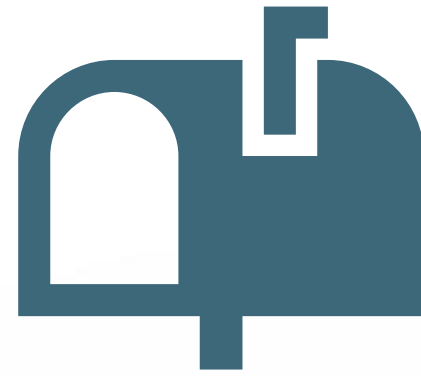
Media Consultant

Commission:  
4 – 9%

Production Costs

Media Buyer

Commission:  
3 – 5%



Mail Vendor

Markup on Mail:  
\$.10 - \$.30 / piece  
(on average)



Digital Vendor

Commission:  
15%



Pollster

Markup on Survey:  
100%



Local News &  
Blogs  
1%

Outdoor 1%

Radio  
10%

Misc.  
5%

Digital & Social  
15%

Broadcast,  
Cable & OTT  
52%

Direct Mail  
16%

## **Paid Media Budget**

# INTERPRETING A **POLL**

What is an “Issue Matrix”?

What is a “Message Test”?

What is “Intensity” and how much do you need?

# UNDERSTANDING TV & PLACEMENT

Gross Ratings Points (GRP)

**Reach** (% of target pop. reached) × **Frequency** (impressions/audience)

What is saturation?

What is “cost-per-point”?

Cable vs. Network (Broadcast)

Radio, Social & Digital vs. “TV”

# UNDERSTANDING **TV & PLACEMENT**

Voluntary vs. Involuntary Media

Positive, Negative & “Contrast” Ads

Risk & Reward of Negative Ads



# The Game

# The Candidates

# THE **BASICS**: Lisa Smith (R)

First-term State Senator, formerly a popular County Commissioner. She won the seat in 2018 by 1.5% of the vote and is a lifelong resident.

Formerly, Lisa was a homemaker active in her HOA and other community outlets. She is the wife of an investment banker and a mother of two high school-aged children.

Lisa was endorsed by Gov. DeSantis, which helped her fend off a Primary challenge. She is pro-choice (anti-partial birth) and voted in favor of the Parents Rights / Don't Say Gay bill.

Lisa was arrested for shoplifting when she was 18-years old.

# THE **BASICS:** Jermaine Taylor (D)

Jermaine has lived in Florida Springs for 6-years and is married with no children. He has not served in public office but is active in the community. He works in insurance sales and was a local College Football star.

Jermaine is pro-choice and opposed the Parents Rights / Don't Say Gay bill. In 2020, he attended the George Floyd protests in Florida Springs that turned violent and organized BLM protests.

He has been endorsed by a DC-based group that proposed “defunding the police” in 2020.



# The District

# THE **BASICS**: The District

The **voter registration** breakdown of Florida Springs is:

44% Democrat

32% Republican

24% Independent/NPA/Third Party

The **demographics** of Florida Springs are:

55% white

25% Black

15% Hispanic

5% Other

# THE **BASICS**: The District

Lisa Smith, the **Republican**, has a \$3 million war chest.

Jermaine Taylor, the **Democrat** has a \$1.25 million war chest.

In 2018, there were 276,812 votes cast in the State Senate race:

Households: 207,609 voting households

Registration Split: Same as Voter Registration

The cost per point is \$220 for TV.

One week of a robust 10-network is \$50,000.

# THINGS TO **KNOW**

We chose Charlie Crist as the Democratic nominee because he was ahead at the time this scenario was designed.

To simplify this scenario, neither candidate can expect outside help from political parties or PCs.

Due to time constraints, there are no cross-tabs in the poll.

Not every piece of information is a clue to victory.



# THINGS TO **KNOW**

Information in the summary is considered well-known.

There is no third-party candidate.

Both candidates already paid the filing fee.

This scenario unfolds in 2022.

# The Goal

# THE GAME

In a few sentences, what is your campaign's **strategy**?

- Why is it the **winning** strategy?

In a few sentences, what is your **message**?

- Indicate which of your TV messages is “positive” or “negative” or “contrast.”
- Why is it the **winning** message?

Using the tabletop board and chips, allocate your campaign's resources.

# The Traps

# THE TRAPS

Taxes—Lisa has a weak spot on taxes, but not in a General Election.

Abortion—big in the news, not in the district.

Career Politician—Lisa isn't viewed as a career politician.

Shoplifting—voters don't hold Lisa's teenage indiscretions against her.

Lack of Experience—voters don't see Jermaine as inexperienced.



# THE **PATH**: Lisa Wins

Fighting inflation and reducing crime are key priorities of the Smith campaign.

These priorities are effectively weaponized against Jermaine, who is tied to the national political environment on crime and inflation.

Lisa Smith is effectively seen as an independent voice in Tallahassee. The campaign carefully selects a few issues that demonstrate her break from party lines on popular issues.

Smith uses her resource advantage to deliver this message effectively.

# THE **PATH**: Jermaine Wins

While voters think “our area” is headed in the right direction, a narrow majority say Florida is headed in the wrong direction. It’s a strong D seat.

Jermaine Taylor decouples from a weak national political climate for Democrats and frames himself as a non-politician, businessman, college football star and fresh face who can shake things up.

Smith loses her “moderate” halo after being tied to Gov. DeSantis.

Taylor spends campaign funds wisely, running a slim operation that prioritizes TV and ads over campaign staff, collateral and extraneous activities.



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## Production Costs

Film Shoot (1 Day):  
\$7,500

Direct Mail:  
\$.55/piece

Static Design:  
\$1000/set

Radio Spot:  
\$1500

Post-Production  
(Editing):  
\$7,500

Text Video  
\$1000

:15 Knockouts  
(Editing):  
\$2,500