



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on August 22, 2016

Trump's New Advisor Conway to Wage "War of Attrition" on Clinton

Hired in July to augment Donald Trump's campaign staff and then promoted to be his campaign manager six weeks later, Kellyanne Conway (shown) has [announced](#), "We're in a war of attrition" in the campaign against Hillary Clinton.

A war of attrition is won when the enemy has sustained such continuous and devastating losses that he (or she) leaves the field of contest. And that's why, says Conway, "The content-free campaign is over. We are going to force the conversation to issues, because the issues favor Donald Trump."



Conway may just have what it will take to win that war. Two decades of political polling, including stints with the Wirthlin Group under President Reagan and hands-on advisory roles with former Congressman Jack Kemp, former Vice President Dan Quayle, former House Speaker Newt Gingrich, former Senator Fred Thompson, and Congressman (now Indiana Governor and Trump's running mate) Mike Pence have taught her not only how to win but how to avoid disaster.

Although she has never managed a political campaign directly (she is the first woman to do so), she knows what needs to be done. Quizzed by the *Washington Times* about her new role, Conway seemed to be already looking to deflect possible negative critiques about her by GOP standard-bearers:

I want my chance to fail as miserably as the Mitt Romney campaign failed.

Romney lost eight of nine swing states, won six percent of the black vote and only 27 percent of Hispanics. I want my chance to do as poorly.

Her strategy is elegant simplicity itself: keep The Donald on point. Focus on the issues most important to the voters, shore up his demographics, and focus on his strengths and Hillary's weaknesses.

That strategy is already in play, with Trump now using scripted speeches on Teleprompters that focus on those issues: immigration, Islamic extremism, unfair and dangerous international trade agreements such as the TPP, and Clinton's policies and personal failures. The scripts are all Trump, according to campaign sources, but she is there to keep him on track. She will be, according to one commentator, Trump's "whisperer" in his ear.

The simpler and clearer the better, said Conway. On the issue of terrorism, she said, "Terrorism is a complex issue with a very simple solution: We kill them before they kill us." This contrasts with the supposed soft, go-along-to-get-along policies of the Clinton/Obama administration.

She also brings focus onto Trump's weakest demographics: women and blacks. The founder of The Polling Group in 1995, Conway is head of WomanTrend, a research arm that has had success in tying female customers more closely to companies and trade groups, such as American Express, ABC News,



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Major League Baseball, and *Ladies Home Journal*. Accordingly, she will polish some of Trump's rough edges in an attempt to capture some of those demographics.

Frank Luntz, for whom Conway worked for a few years before starting her own polling company, said that she is a great fit for the Trump campaign: "She's the perfect balance to Steve Bannon [the campaign's new CEO]. Bannon is going to tell Trump what Trump wants to hear. Kellyanne is going to tell Trump what Trump needs to hear."

Conway is advising Trump to focus on the "security moms" who fear for their safety as terrorist attacks escalate. She is telling him to expand their concerns about jobs, and the immigration threat. She is heavily involved in crafting the latest round of TV ads focusing on these themes.

Trump can pick up votes from a number of places, according to Mish Shedlock:

- 11% of Republicans say they will vote for someone other than Trump or Hillary;
- 9% are unsure, or refused to answer in recent polls;
- 22% of Independent voters say they will vote to someone other than Trump or Hillary; and
- 12% of Independents are unsure about whom they will vote for, or they refused to answer.

"That's a heck of a lot of votes," said Shedlock. "And they are far more likely to break for Trump than for Hillary."

The war of attrition may already be taking its toll on the Clinton campaign. Jim Hoft, writing for the *Gateway Pundit* on August 20, was surprised to learn that Clinton "has no campaign rallies scheduled for the foreseeable future — no campaign rallies are scheduled for the next month!"

He further discovered that, since the first of August, Hillary has had just 11 campaign rallies while Trump has held 24. In addition, the folks just aren't coming out to hear Hillary when she does show up. Those 11 rallies were attended by just 14,500 supporters, an average of just 1,300 per rally.

Trump's numbers, on the other hand, show an aggressive campaigner on the attack. Over that same time period, according to Hoft, Trump held 24 rallies with more than 131,000 supporters attending, for an average of almost 5,500 per event.

If Woody Allen is correct: "Eighty percent of success is showing up," then Hillary's campaign may already have dug itself a hole out of which it will be most difficult to climb.

The latest polls may also be reflecting Trump's "war of attrition" against Clinton. The *LA Times*/USC poll of 2,359 likely voters quizzed between August 15 and August 22 show Trump leading Clinton by one percentage point.

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