
Franklin D. Roosevelt — “The Great Communicator”
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**Training for a Career in Politics -
Draft for Speech**

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I have been asked to write about the kind of training our young men and women should have for a political career. Let me say at the outset that I do not believe that anyone should adopt politics as a "career," in the ordinary sense of the word. The day of the professional politician is passing; and besides a greater proportion of governmental positions, year by year, are passing under the civil service. Therefore, any deliberate attempt to make a living by holding office under modern conditions is doomed to failure from the start. This is true in spite of the rather rare examples which we see of political leaders in some of our communities, who, year after year, continue to hold appointive, and in rare cases, elective offices.

Fifty years ago it was more common to find individuals making a living by the sale of political power. Today these practices are becoming more and more despised throughout the country.

The civil service and more lately the diplomatic and consular services have become fairly definite careers in which ~~promotions and salaries~~ provide opportunities for promotion and higher salaries when ability is shown. However, one can hardly consider these services as political careers, for it is the exception rather than the rule to find Civil Service men or women either candidates for office or appointees among those holding the highest positions. This perhaps is unfortunate and it is to be hoped that Presidents and Governors will, in the future, more than in the past, appoint members of their Cabinets and heads of their important commissions from the ranks of the prominent government employees.

A strictly political career, therefore, should presuppose some kind of profession or business in private life to fall back upon. Those who run for public office should not be deterred by the possibility of losing an election or by the possibility that if elected and later retired to private life, they will have nothing to fall back upon.

Even if by special training and education or special fitness for a position, one can obtain a high official post by election or appointment, the post provides only a temporary income which sooner or later will be terminated.

It is well to remember, however, that the field of elective or appointive offices is becoming more and more open to our young men and our young women who have qualified themselves for leadership in conducting the affairs of our nation. These are the younger generation to or who, in addition, ~~examine~~ in connection with their chosen private business ~~and~~ have given special study to government as such - municipal state or national. As an executive during the World War and more lately as Governor of New York, I am frank in saying that I find the task of making selections for important government administrative offices, a difficult one - not because of the difficulty of choosing between scores of candidates but because of the difficulty of finding the man or woman definitely and conspicuously fitted for the task.

As specialization has become the rule in business life, it is also being followed more and more in government affairs. Therefore, there is the definite assurance to the future generation that they will be given consideration for governmental positions if they become outstanding experts in any one of the score or more fields of government activities. These governmental activities follow in many particulars similar occupations in private life and private business yet they require the additional knowledge of the theory and practice of public relations.

I hope that I am right in my belief that more and more young people are entering the business of life with the idea that when the opportunity offers they will seek to place their knowledge and experience at the service of their fellow citizens. The first step, of course, is in local affairs - if they make good their state and nation will call upon them.