



# Anybody Got A Fresh Idea?

## *Team Obama's Reelect Strategy Revolves Around An Unrelenting Negative Campaign*

**Obama: "Because If You Don't Have Any Fresh Ideas, Then You Use Stale Tactics To Scare Voters."**

OBAMA: "Because if you don't have any fresh ideas, then you use stale tactics to scare the voters. If you don't have a record to run on, then you paint your opponent as someone people should run from. You make a big election about small things." (Senator Barack Obama, Address Accepting the Presidential Nomination at the Democratic National Convention, [Denver, CO](#), 8/28/08)

### **IN REELECT, OBAMA HAS DITCHED THE HOPE AND CHANGE TALK IN FAVOR OF SCARE TACTICS**

**"Though The Obamans Certainly Hit John McCain Hard Four Years Ago—Running More Negative Ads Than Any Campaign In History—What They Intend To Do To Romney Is More Savage."** (John Heilemann, "Hope: The Sequel," [New York Magazine](#), 5/27/12)

- **Obama Relies On "Going Negative," Which Is "Very Different From The Formula" He Used In 2008.** "Obama and his advisers fell back on the timeless method that has essentially become the default option for presidential reelection campaigns, despite his promises to change the process. They prefer to talk euphemistically about 'drawing the contrast,' but everyone else calls it going negative. This was something very different from the formula that elected the country's first African-American president, but it would have to do." (Glenn Thrush, *Obama's Last Stand*, 2012)
- **Obama's 2012 Reelection Campaign Is "A Depressing Experience Compared With The Head Days Of 2008."** "That reluctance to fully commit to the grungier realities of 2012, said people around him, hinted at a deeper sentiment that he shared with his dispirited 2008 voters despite his surface bravado. The reelection campaign was, simply, a depressing experience compared with the heady days of 2008. 'We have got to stop buying our old bullshit,' one of Obama's state directors told me, summing up the opinion of a handful of top Obama advisers. 'We're our own worst enemy with this crap. This isn't 2008. We've got to accept that. So does he.'" (Glenn Thrush, *Obama's Last Stand*, 2012)

**CBS's Bob Schieffer: "Whatever Happened To Hope And Change?"** "Well, you know, one of the refreshing changes when the President was elected -- he talked about hope and change. Whatever happened to hope and change? Now, it seems he's coming right out of the box with these old fashioned negative ads. All campaigns seem to think are the basis of all campaigns now." (CBS's ["Face The Nation,"](#) 5/27/12)

## ***Going Negative Is Obama's Only Strategy***

### **"Democrats Long Have Said That Obama's Best Hopes For Re-Election May Lie With Disqualifying Romney" Given The State Of The Economy And Public Disapproval For Obama's Signature Policies.**

"Democrats long have said Obama's best hopes for re-election may lie with disqualifying Romney given that the economy remains sluggish and the country is divided over or outright opposes some of the president's signature policies, like the health care law." (Beth Fouhy, "Obama Negative Ads Could Hurt Personal Popularity," [The Associated Press](#), 7/24/12)

**Democrat Pollsters Pat Caddell And Doug Schoen: Obama Can Only Win By Running "The Most Negative Campaign In History."** "Put simply, it seems that the White House has concluded that if the president cannot run on his record, he will need to wage the most negative campaign in history to stand any chance. With his job approval ratings below 45% overall and below 40% on the economy, the president cannot affirmatively make the case that voters are better off now than they were four years ago. He—like everyone else—knows that they are worse off." (Patrick H. Caddell and Douglas E. Schoen, "The Hillary Moment," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 11/21/11)

- **Obama Will "Run A Much More Negative Campaign" To Combat A Jobless Rate That Has Not Allowed For A President's Reelection "Since The Great Depression."** "The jobless rate will stand at levels that have not led to a president's re-election since the Great Depression. Largely because of that, Obama will run a much more negative campaign, his aides acknowledge, even if it threatens to demoralize some supporters who were inspired by his 2008 message of hope." (Charles Babington, "2012 Race Likely To Be Close, Tough, Maybe Brutal," [The Associated Press](#), 11/5/11)
- **Democratic Strategist: "Unless Things Change And Obama Can Run On Accomplishments, He Will Have To Kill Romney."** "'Unless things change and Obama can run on accomplishments, he will have to kill Romney,' said a prominent Democratic strategist aligned with the White House. The strategy came down to proving Romney was unfit to govern, a phony, and 'weird.'" (Glenn Thrush, *Obama's Last Stand*, 2012)

## **MAYBE OBAMA DOESN'T HAVE ANY "FRESH IDEAS" TO RUN ON**

**Obama: "I Feel Very Comfortable With The Fact That When You Look At The Campaign We're Running, We Are Focused On The Issues And The Differences That Matter To Working Families All Across America."** "And I feel very comfortable with the fact that when you look at the campaign we're running, we are focused on the issues and the differences that matter to working families all across America. And that's exactly the kind of debate the American people deserve." (President Barack Obama, Remarks By The President To The White House Press Corps, [Washington, DC](#), 8/20/12)

**The Associated Press: "The President Can't Tell Voters About A Grand Economic Comeback Story Because There Isn't One To Tell."** (Ken Thomas, "Obama Doesn't Emphasize Issues He Fought Hard For," [The Associated Press](#), 6/12/12)

**The Wall Street Journal's Kimberly Strassel: Obama Has "Achieved New Levels Of Vagueness This Election Season."** "President Obama has a reputation for talking, but not necessarily for saying much. He has achieved new levels of vagueness this election season. Beyond repeating that he's in favor of making the 'rich' pay for more government 'investment,' he hasn't offered a single new idea for a second term." (Kimberly Strassel, Op-Ed, "Strassel: The Silent Second-Term Agenda," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 8/23/12)

- **The Wall Street Journal's Kimberly Strassel: "The Core Of The Obama Strategy Is To Make Americans Worry That Whatever Mitt Romney Does, It Will Be Worse."** (Kimberly Strassel, Op-Ed, "Strassel: The Silent Second-Term Agenda," [The Wall Street Journal](#), 8/23/12)

**Democrat Pollster Mark Penn: “Obama Needs More Than Just A New Message.”** “But pollster Mark Penn, Schoen's former partner and a member of Clinton's inner circle in the White House and later a force on Hillary Clinton's presidential campaign, said Obama needs more than just a new message — but also a new economic plan. ‘I think that the president needs a new economic plan that takes the country into the 21st century global economy, a plan with emphasis on education, infrastructure, innovation, and growing exports. A plan that creates new economy jobs for a country that wants to move forward,’ he told BuzzFeed, adding that ‘most of the messages [in the memo] are too much about raising taxes and raising spending in a public that has changed quite dramatically from 1992.’” (Zeke Miller, “Clintonites Hit The Panic Button For Obama,” [BuzzFeed](#), 6/12/12)

**Obama Campaigned In 2008 “With A Long List Of Ambitious Goals” But “This Time Around, His Scope Is Smaller.”** “President Barack Obama campaigned for president in 2008 with a long list of ambitious goals. Among them: cut middle-class taxes, tackle climate change, cover the uninsured, overhaul Wall Street regulations and pass sweeping immigration changes. This time around, his scope is smaller.” (Laura Meckler and Carol E. Lee, “Obama’s More Modest Pitch,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 5/13/12)

- **Obama’s Campaign Speech, TV Ads, And Website Are Primarily Focused On Attacking Romney And Defending Obama’s Record Rather Than Outlining A Second Term.** “Mr. Obama's new campaign speech, along with his first big round of television ads and his website, are largely devoted to defending his record as president and critiquing his opponent, former Massachusetts Gov. Mitt Romney, rather than describing the vision of a second Obama term.” (Laura Meckler and Carol E. Lee, “Obama’s More Modest Pitch,” [The Wall Street Journal](#), 5/13/12)