

# BC NDP Convention Minus 4 Days: Why We Lost the Election

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Monday, November 23, 2009

<https://politicsrespun.org/2009/11/bc-ndp-convention-minus-4-days-why-we-lost-the-election/>

We didn't lose the election. The Liberals didn't win it either.

We failed to win it.

There are a great many explanations for why we failed to win, but I have spent a great deal of time since about 8:30pm on Tuesday, May 12, 2009 talking to dozens of people about what is systemically wrong with the BC NDP so we can think about moving forward. I was angry too, but quickly I stopped the urge to participate in a witch hunt. We didn't win an election we should have. That was done. It was time to figure out what needs fixing...future focussed.

Here is a short list of many of the most popular explanations for why we aren't in government right now, in no particular order. [Tomorrow I'll explore how these issues connect to party transformation](#) and why I'm running for BC NDP Vice-President.

1. Carole James - bad leader, woman, not inspiring, lacks vision or passion, been around too long
2. Negative Campaign - smearing Cambell, Maui, COPE 378's ads, using the Liberals' tactics of getting elected when they largely point out how much the NDP sucks, relying on the Liberals' horrible policies to allow the party to phone in a campaign
3. The Platform - unfocused, not clearly promoted as positive alternatives, not communicated to members or the public
4. The Slogan - too many slogans, unclear slogans, slogan-based campaign
5. Party Disorganization - despite knowing when the election was to happen not having enough volunteers, money, key staff when required
6. Policy Reversals - Axe the Tax and supporting the Port Mann Bridge rebuild and Gateway which violated explicit party policy
7. Rogue Leadership - lack of accessibility and accountability through different elements of the party
8. Fear - throwing under the bus anything necessary to avoid/appease criticism
9. Not Developing Constituencies - lack of time, money, and resources to develop robust activists, fundraisers, and networks with progressive groups eager to mobilize members and supporters to stop the Liberals

OK, so #9 is a bit of a plant. That's what [Think Forward BC NDP](#) speaks to and it's a bit of a hint at what tomorrow's piece will be all about. But it's not a coincidence. In figuring out what Vancouver-Kensington wants to do for the next 3.5 years, we looked at these very areas that we need to develop further.

I believe the whole party can benefit from addressing the systemic weaknesses in the party. That's why I'm running for one of the 6 Vice-President positions.

[Tomorrow I'll explore each of the above areas](#) in the context of transforming the party into the electoral

wing of a progressive social movement.