

NDP Leaders, By the Numbers and the Intangibles

by Stephen Elliott-Buckley - Thursday, February 02, 2012

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There are some interesting dynamics going on with the NDP leadership race that we can track with numbers, see way below.

And while numbers tell some stories, they don't necessarily track [intangible criteria of leadership qualities](#) like these, which I would perhaps suggest in this order:

1. intelligence
2. progressive vision: social, political, economic, ecological justice
3. policy breadth
4. bilingual
5. integrity
6. inspiring, engaging
7. inclusive of all of our cultures
8. self-confidence
9. ability to grow the party
10. speaking ability/clarity
11. ability to debate
12. charm, charisma, ability to lead so people want to follow
13. ability to credibly counter Stephen Harper
14. ability to deliver one-liners and media sound bites.

But some numbers do say some things. Here are a few observations from the chart below about funds raised in the 4th quarter of 2011 [which excludes \$11,000 Topp raised in the 3rd quarter]:

1. These donation numbers do not indicate which month, which province, or which age group these donations come from. Each campaign has that data for their own use and the party would have it all since they process the donations, but I wouldn't expect they'd be sharing that donor breakdown with all the campaigns.
2. Mulcair, Dewar, Cullen, Nash and Topp have the most number of donors, in that order. This may indicate the breadth of support within party members/donors.
3. Topp, Mulcair, Nash, Dewar and Cullen have raised the most funds, in that order. This certainly indicates support, but does not capture growing support after January 1, 2012, which will be critical.
4. Average donations that are high may show a concentration of support among fewer supporters. Topp has the highest average donation, but is 5th in terms of numbers of donors. Mulcair has the most donors, but he is in the middle of the pack when it comes to average donation, possibly indicating his support is more widespread. Oddly, average donation increases alphabetically with the exception of Romeo Saganash.
5. You can [read about how the endorsement points are calculated here](#), but you'll notice I don't

include endorsements in the leadership criteria listed above because I prefer members to elect leaders based on who they are, not who famous people say they are. I recognize, though, that this is not the way it works for many.

6. When looking at the endorsement points we see two tiers emerging: Topp, Nash, Mulcair and Dewar at the top. I think tiers are dangerous, horse-race, over-simplifications that do not effectively encompass the breadth of criteria that people use to elect a leader. And despite the wisdom of the endorsement point calculation, NDP members relying on merely that is not so wise, partly because one member, one vote means individual members elect a leader, not blocks of delegates at a convention who are more or less tied to candidates and those they end up supporting.
7. But when examining those four with the highest endorsement points, they also increase alphabetically, but show that Nash has "paid/earned" the least for each point if we view donations raised as money spent on endorsements, which is itself, of course, an over-simplification. Topp and Dewar follow Nash and Mulcair has "paid/earned" almost twice as much per endorsement point than Nash.
8. Jack Layton ran away with [more than half of all the donations](#) when he became leader. This is not going to happen in this leadership race. Money will buy lots in this race, but it won't necessarily buy exposure across the whole country, which is necessary before members can learn enough about each candidate to consider them.

Candidate	2011 Q4 \$ Raised	2011 Q4 Donors	2011 Q4 \$/Donor	Endorsement Points	Funds Raised/ Endorsement Point
Ashton	\$10,215	58	\$176.12	23.5	\$434.68
Cullen	\$86,109	442	\$194.82	26.5	\$3,249.40
Dewar	\$93,931	456	\$205.99	88.8	\$1,057.78
Mulcair	\$145,863	621	\$234.88	128.8	\$1,132.48
Nash	\$108,223	347	\$311.88	158.1	\$684.52
Saganash	\$17,552	87	\$201.75	7.5	\$2,340.27
Singh	\$49,077	110	\$446.15	0	Div/0
Topp	\$156,597	278	\$563.3	202.5	\$773.32