

# HER CAMPUS<sup>SM</sup>

## Top 10 Lessons Learned from Canada's First Female Prime Minister

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Every once in a while you are given a once-in-a-lifetime opportunity; the chance to meet a famous and inspirational national personality. On Wednesday, November 6th, Equal Voice and the University of Ottawa gave students and the public the chance to hear from Canada's 19th Prime Minister, the only female to hold the title to date. The Right Honourable Kim Campbell, along with Member of Parliament Lauren Liu and our very own, Prof Penny Collenette, attended an evening of discussion entitled *Reflections from Canada's Only Female Prime Minister*, part of the Women's Inspiration Series at the University of Ottawa.

Through friendly banter, these impressive women from our three main federal political parties, gave us insight into the daily life and decisions of women in politics. The Rt Hon. Kim Campbell was especially captivating. Like many successful professionals, these women had to rely on their inner strength, sense of humour, good time management skills, and the people around them to get where they are now.



Elizabeth Radtke, Nasha Brownridge and Stephanie Speroni meet The Right Honourable Kim Campbell.

## **Here are the top ten lessons that we learned from our 19th (and only female) Prime Minister:**

### **Stake out time for yourself**

Between work and family, politicians find that it's nearly impossible to have a balanced life. This also applies to us collegiettes as we try to balance school work, classes, part-time jobs, friends, family and relationships. Having a busy schedule might make you happy at first, but without that special time to yourself you'll quickly feel overwhelmed by everything you have on your plate. Schedule in time to do your nails, eat lunch by yourself, or go for a run.

Women belong in politics. Not because we're better, but because we're different.

Diversity, be it different genders, classes, backgrounds, is good. Like only ever taking classes in economics is tiresome, but adding a couple of electives to your program makes your classes that much more interesting.

### **Be more confident in yourself**

Men see nothing wrong in boasting about their success. They demand high-fives for everything they do, from asking a girl out on a date to getting that A+. These women's message to us? At the very least, leave a written message to your boss, teacher, etc. You deserve the compliments, and they deserve to know about your good work ethics!

### **Ethics are important**

Most of us are bored to death of hearing about ethics. Kim Campbell wants to make sure that we pay attention in class. There's nothing classy about acting out when you don't get your way, or sneaking around your friend's back to date that guy you both like. People will remember what you do, and how you did it, so always act ethically!

### **Seize your opportunities**

Kim Campbell became Prime Minister by stepping up to the plate, leading her party and country when others couldn't. So the next time your club president can't make it to a meeting, volunteer to run it for them. Everyone will notice the work you do, and think of you come election time.

### **Prove yourself**

These ladies had to convince the nation that they were able to work in politics, and the same principal applies to us. Whether you're thinking about joining a sorority come January, or you're trying to convince a potential employer that you're the perfect fit for the job, be clear about what you can offer them, and what you expect in return.

### **Surround yourself with good people**

The Rt Hon. Kim Campbell told us about how her campaign leader didn't even know what her policies were when she started campaigning. Her message was clear: the people around you will shape your success. Share your ideas and problems with your friends, and stop hanging out with people who bring you down. They say that two heads are better than one- but that's pretty useless when the other head is looking the other way!

### **People care about what you wear**

I can hear the cry of outrage at this one, but it's so true. And it doesn't just apply to women (though I have to say that we get more flack than men do)! With the current fashion styles, almost anything goes! As long as you look professional, clean, and feel confident about your wardrobe, everyone will respect you. That being said, Prof Penny Collette reminded us that people notice even the little things, like your earrings. So make sure to change up your outfit; have fun with it!

### **Negative ads are a reflection of your party, and politics in general**

Nothing could be truer in college life. When you speak poorly about others, or start an unfounded rumour, you have to realize that others will find out, and that they will judge you accordingly. I'm not saying that you shouldn't call someone out for not doing their part of the group project- just be careful about what you say. Make sure to talk about what they have or haven't done, don't attack who they are.

### **Know when to move on**

You can't control everyone around you, nor should you try. My favourite quote of the night was when The Rt Hon. Kim Campbell told us how she dealt with people who were being difficult (or as some would say, who were being a b\*\*\*\*). "She's there, she's difficult. Next."

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