Abstract: We develop a model of a contest between two political candidates who may care about their reputations separately from how they affect the election outcome. In the game’s first stage, each candidate chooses to maintain his maximum reputation or to shirk to lower it. In the second stage, candidates undertake positive or negative campaigns. We allow the magnitudes of reputational effects of positive and negative campaigns, and the relative importance candidates place on reputation and winning, to vary. Under many parameter values, candidates shirk in order to change the equilibrium strategies and outcome in the second stage of the game.