

A Kicker Wants To Be The Nation's Quarterback

Posted by Mike Florio on June 30, 2009, 10:23 a.m. EDT

Eschewing the first rule of political aspirations (i.e., never talk about one's political aspirations), Jets kicker [Jay Feely](#) discloses in his *Sporting News Today* profile that item No. 1 on his bucket list is to be elected president of the United States.

And it's likely not a joke. Feely's Twitter bio mentions that he has political aspirations.

Feely made some waves last week with an appearance on Sean Hannity's television show, which was followed by a little back-and-forth with Deadspin on the question of whether the veteran special-teamer thinks our current president is or isn't a Socialist muslim.

We're inclined to go easy on Feely, in part because we like the fact that he's different from the traditional be-seen-and-not-heard kicker, and in part because his *SNT* profile also confirms his membership in PFT Planet.

But the fact remains that no one who declares that he or she wants to be elected president is ever elected to be anything more than dog catcher.

"Calling your shot" is a concept that simply doesn't fit with politics; those who want to hold a high office rarely if ever say so — until they formally launch a campaign for said office.

We're not sure why that is. Perhaps the thinking is that voters gravitate toward candidates who use phrases like, "I want to serve my fellow man" and not, "I'm only doing this for self-satisfaction."

Consider this 2008 quote from Jim Nantz of CBS, regarding his own rumored political aspirations: "I don't want to mislead anyone right now, because I have the greatest job in the world. I get reminded of that by strangers in airports all the time. . . . So it's going to take an awful lot for me to trade that in. . . . The only tug I feel is that I really admire the people who do serve, who try to make things better for all people. I do wish at times that I could do more. We try our best with all the philanthropic things we're connected with. But great leadership — and I've been exposed to great leadership — is something I admire. I'm not prepared to declare my candidacy quite yet. . . . Is it something I would rule out? It's not something I'd rule out. Something on my mind? Deep in the back of my mind for later on. And I'm not talking about running for president of the United States. I'm just talking about something at the local level, sampling it, and seeing if this is something where I can make a difference."

In other words, Nantz wants to be president. But he knows not to say that he wants to be president.

Here's another reason not to talk about political aspirations. It likely becomes even more impossible to navigate the complex, shark-infested political waters at any level — federal, state, local — with the politician's ultimate goal tattooed on his or her forehead.

That speaks to the more subtle point. To become a successful politician, Feely will need to win the respect of other politicians, specifically of those other politicians who "get it." The problem is that most politicians who "get it" will immediately conclude that an aspiring politician who tells the free world that he wants to be its leader doesn't "get it."

In Feely's defense, he likely began talking about his political aspirations at a young age, long before he was in a position to learn the *Fight Club* nuances of the pursuit of high office. And so he's now in a position of having to unring a bell that he has continued to keep ringing.

Still, his best approach moving forward would be to stop talking about wanting to be president, and to start walking the long, twisted road toward getting there.

Not with periodic appearances on television shows, but by picking the right community in the right state where he'll be most likely to win a position in the legislature.