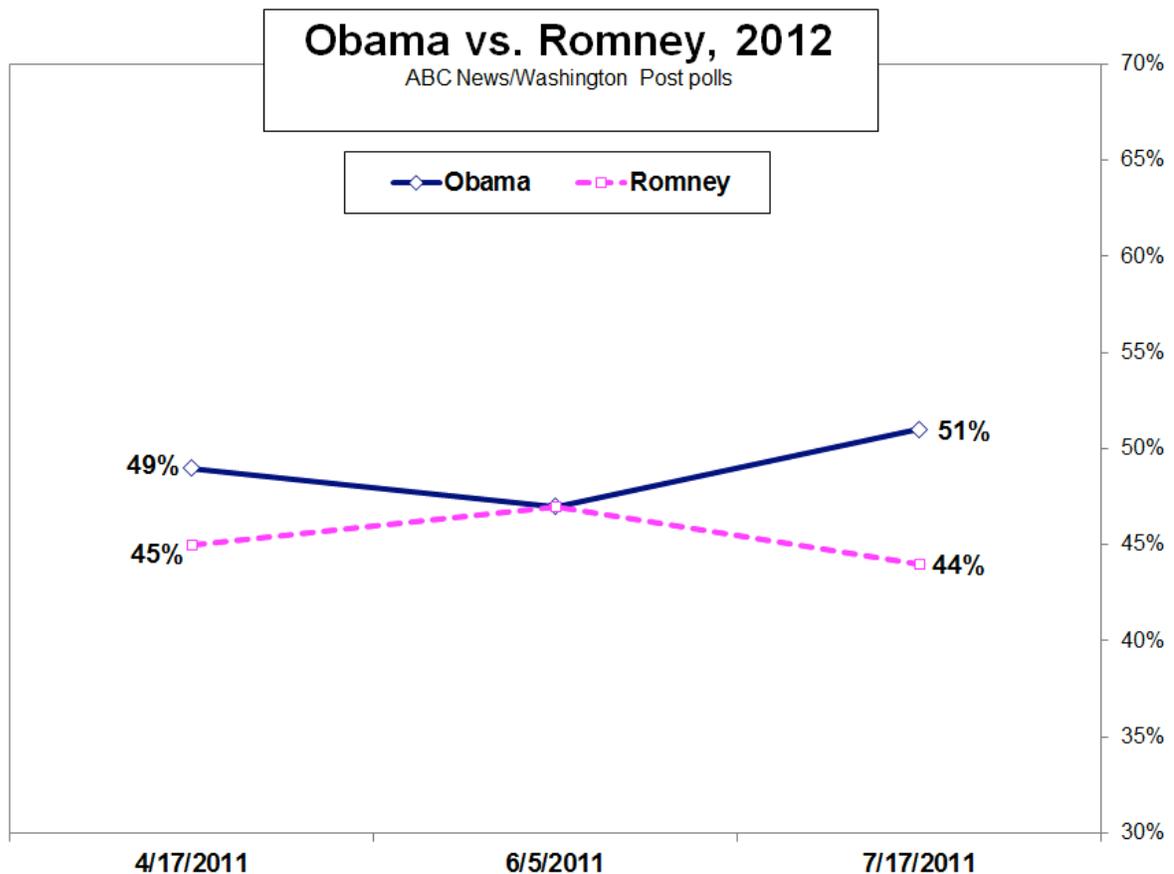


Obama and Romney Ride a See-Saw, With Challenges for the GOP Leader

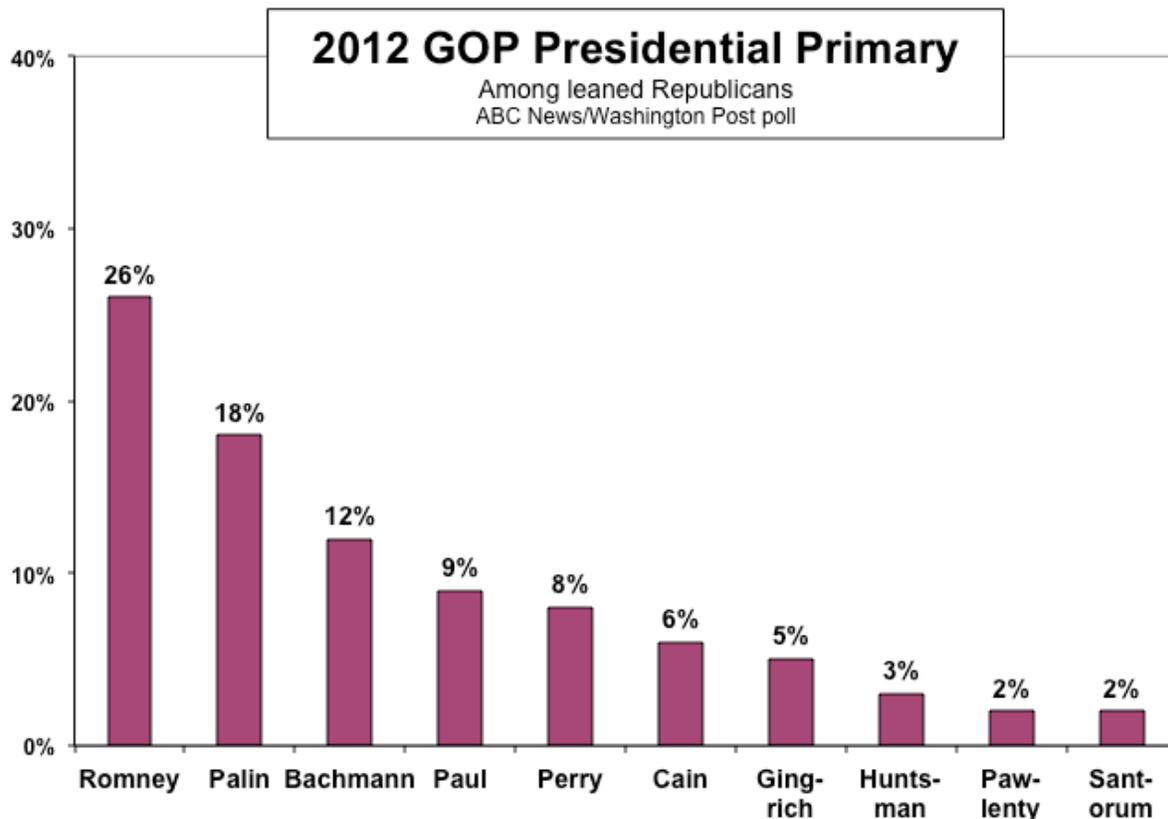
Barack Obama moved to an advantage against Republican frontrunner Mitt Romney among all Americans in the latest ABC News/Washington Post poll, but the match-up tightens among registered voters – underscoring the importance of turnout in the still far-off 2012 election.

While Obama can spend the next 15 months tweaking his turnout machine, Romney has more immediate challenges. His support looks more like it comes from the head than the heart: Romney leads in his party as having the best chance to beat Obama, having the best experience and being the strongest leader. But he only runs about evenly with his top competitor, Sarah Palin, as the candidate who “best understands the problems of people like you” (on this Palin has a numerical advantage), is “closest to you on the issues” and best represents core Republican values.



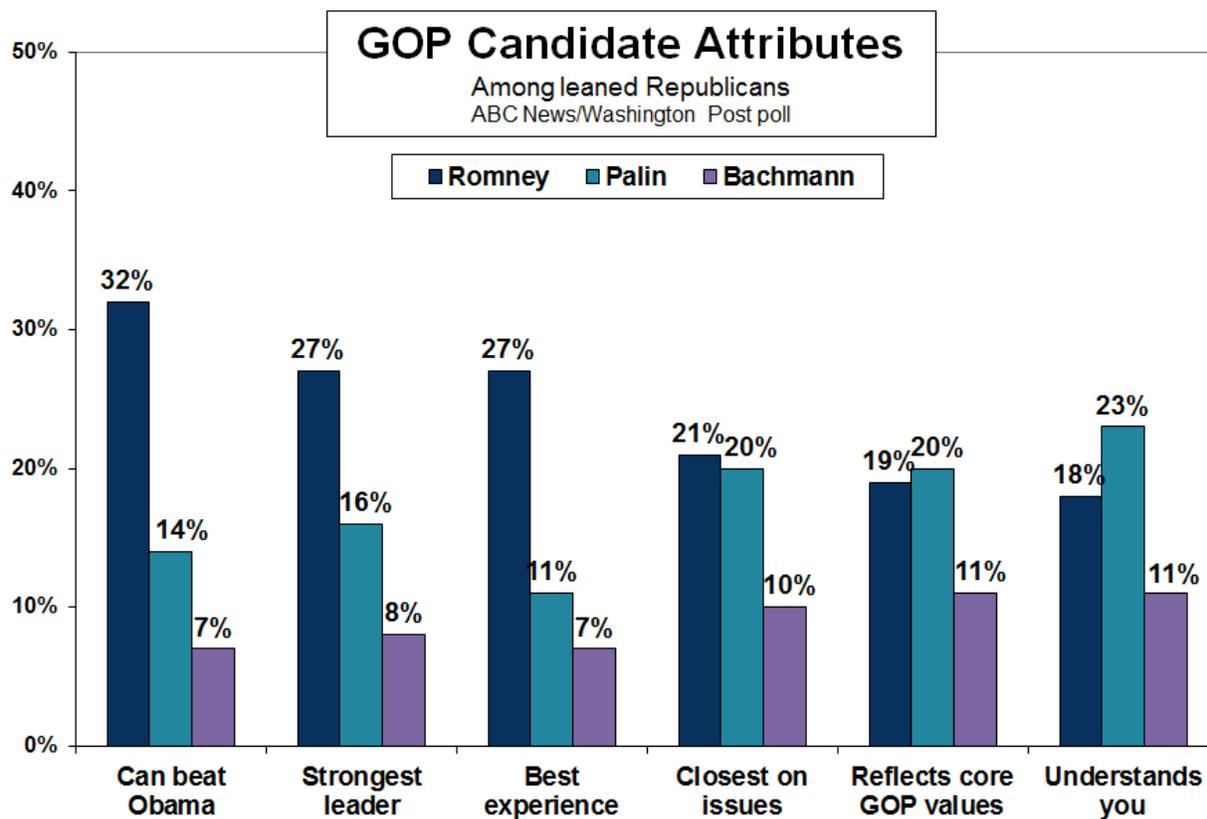
While 29 percent of Romney’s supporters favor him “strongly,” Palin, Michelle Bachman and Ron Paul – who follow Romney numerically – have 39 percent strong support combined. And while 54 percent of Republicans and Republican-leaning independents are now satisfied with their choice of candidates – up 7 points from last month – that’s still well below the level of satisfaction at this time in 2007, 65 percent.

As things stand in this poll, produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#), Romney has 26 percent support for the nomination among Republicans and Republican-leaning independents, Palin 18 percent and Bachmann 12 percent, with the rest in single digits. Little changes by removing Palin or Rick Perry, neither of whom officially is a candidate; their support spreads out among the others, to no individual’s advantage.



Romney’s 26 percent support, of course, means that 74 percent of leaned Republicans currently don’t support him, ample evidence that there’s plenty of room for movement. That’s especially true given the close divisions in some key GOP groups. Palin is essentially tied with Romney among evangelical white Protestants, for example, while Bachmann runs evenly with him among very conservative Republicans and among strong supporters of the Tea Party movement. Further suggesting a motivated base, Bachmann also runs evenly with Romney among leaned Republicans who are following the presidential race very closely.

Romney, for his part, continues to do particularly well among higher-income and more-educated leaned Republicans. The latter are a particularly weak group for Palin – she slips to 9 percent support among Republicans and Republican-leaning independents who hold a college degree.



GENERAL – In a general-election matchup, Obama-Romney stand at 51-44 percent among all adults, compared with 47-47 percent in early June. Among registered voters, it’s 49-47 percent now, vs. 46-49 percent in June.

Obama looks to have turned the budget debate to his advantage; as reported in [previously released results](#) from this poll, his position on the deficit is more broadly popular, he’s taking less heat than the GOP for unwillingness to compromise and he’s got a sizable lead in the view that he cares more about [protecting the middle class](#).

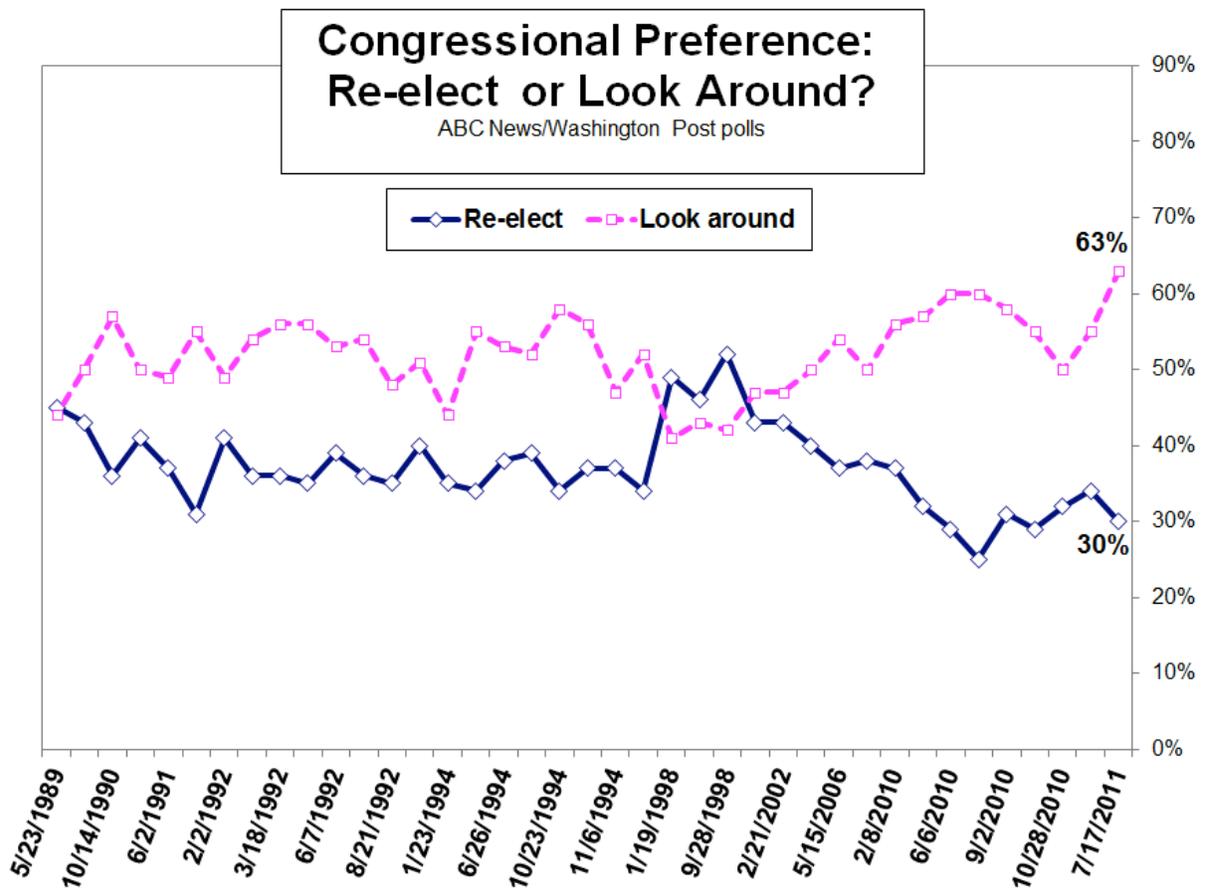
In Obama vs. Romney, the main change is among independents, the key swing voters in national elections. They divided by 44-48 percent Obama-Romney in June, vs. 52-43 percent now. Obama also is doing better now than a month ago among white Catholics (another swing voter group), women, moderates and middle- to upper-middle income earners. Notably, Romney’s lead among “angry” Americans has narrowed considerably – a 53-point margin vs. Obama last month, a 32-point margin now.

Other potential GOP nominees tested in this survey are at or near the customary baseline vote for either party's candidate, 40 percent. It's 53-41 percent for Obama vs. Paul, 55-38 percent vs. Perry and 56-39 percent vs. Bachmann. (The results are similar among registered voters – 52-42, 53-40, 55-40.)

Independents shy from Bachmann and Perry – they lose these swing voters by 18 and 15 points, respectively. Paul is another story; he trails Obama among independents by 52-44 percent, essentially the same as Romney's result among independents. The difference is that with Paul as the nominee, 15 percent of Republicans defect to Obama; with Romney, it's 7 percent.

THE FUTURE – It's important to note that current preferences do not predict the future (ask Rudy Giuliani or Hillary Clinton). Nor, necessarily, do early strength-of-support numbers; Giuliani had 32 percent strong support at this point in 2007, while Clinton's strong support was vastly higher, 68 percent. Yet both lost.

Indeed candidates with deep support may also find it less broad – perhaps less of a concern in low-turnout caucuses and primaries, but potentially more problematic in higher-turnout events.



In any case, Obama – and incumbents in general – can't rest easy, in the least: Given current dissatisfaction with Washington, 63 percent of Americans say they're inclined to look around for

someone new to support for Congress, rather than re-elect their current representative. That's the highest anti-incumbency on record in polling back to 1989. It's up especially among Democrats, a possible sign they're stirring as they did not in 2010.

Dissatisfaction with Washington plays to a potential Romney strength in the general election; he's distanced himself from the unpopular political and ideological confrontations playing out in the nation's capital. But his comparatively soft ratings on empathy and representing his party's core values raise questions of how motivated his supporters will prove, in the primaries and, should he prevail, in the general election beyond.

METHODOLOGY – This ABC News/Washington Post poll was conducted by telephone July 14-17, 2011, among a random national sample of 1,001 adults, including landline and cell-phone-only respondents. Results have a margin of [sampling error](#) of 3.5 points for the full sample and 5.5 points for leaned Republicans. The survey was produced for ABC News by [Langer Research Associates](#) of New York, N.Y, with sampling, data collection and tabulation by Abt-SRBI of New York, N.Y.

Analysis by Gary Langer.

ABC News polls can be found at ABCNEWS.com at <http://abcnews.com/pollingunit>.

Media contact: Cathie Levine, (212) 456-4934.

Full results follow.

*= less than 0.5 percent.

1, 2a,b,d, 3a,b,d, 4-7, 15-22 previously released.

2c,e, 3c, 8-14, 33-35 held for release.

23. On another subject: Thinking about the next election in November 2012, right now, are you inclined to vote to re-elect your representative in Congress, or are you inclined to look around for someone else to vote for?

	Re-elect	Look around	Depends (vol.)	No opinion
7/17/11	30	63	2	5
6/5/11	34	55	4	6
10/28/10	32	50	7	11
10/3/10	29	55	9	7
9/2/10	31	58	5	6
7/11/10	25	60	6	8
6/6/10	29	60	5	6
4/25/10 RV	32	57	7	4
2/8/10	36	56	4	4
11/15/09	38	50	6	5
5/15/06	35	55	6	4
6/5/05	40	50	8	3
2/21/02	40	48	7	6
10/31/99 RV	43	47	9	2
9/28/98 LV	52	42	NA	6

7/12/98		42	44	5	10
1/19/98		47	41	7	4
8/27/97		34	52	9	5
11/6/94	RV	37	47	7	8
10/31/94	RV	37	56	2	5
10/23/94	RV	34	58	4	5
9/11/94	RV	39	52	4	5
6/26/94		35	54	6	5
3/27/94		32	56	6	7
1/23/94		32	46	10	12
11/14/93		38	52	5	5
8/21/92	RV	35	48	5	12
7/8/92		34	54	3	9
6/7/92		36	53	4	7
4/9/92		33	56	3	8
3/18/92		35	56	3	5
3/11/92		36	54	3	7
2/2/92		38	51	4	7
10/21/91		31	55	7	6
6/2/91		37	49	5	9
11/4/90	LV	41	50	NA	8
10/14/90		36	57	"	7
5/21/90		43	50	3	3
5/23/89		45	44	4	6

24. How closely are you following the 2012 presidential race: very closely, somewhat closely, not too closely, or not closely at all?

		---- Closely -----			---- Not closely -----			No
		NET	Very	Smwt.	NET	Not too	At all	opinion
7/17/11		61	18	43	39	23	15	*
6/5/11		61	22	39	38	23	15	*
11/3/08	RV	91	64	28	8	5	4	*
11/2/08	RV	90	63	28	9	5	4	*
11/1/08	RV	90	61	29	10	6	4	*
10/11/08	RV	92	59	33	8	4	4	*
9/29/08	RV	89	58	31	11	7	5	*
9/22/08	RV	91	55	36	9	5	4	0
9/7/08	RV	89	51	38	10	6	5	*
8/22/08	RV	84	42	42	16	11	5	*
7/13/08	RV	79	36	42	21	12	9	1
6/15/08		75	34	41	25	12	13	*
5/11/08		83	39	44	17	13	5	0
4/13/08		84	37	47	16	11	5	*
3/2/08		84	42	42	15	11	4	*
2/1/08		81	35	46	19	12	7	*
1/12/08		79	32	47	21	15	6	*
12/9/07		72	21	51	28	19	8	*
11/1/07		67	21	46	33	22	12	0
9/30/07		69	21	48	30	21	10	*
7/21/07		70	22	48	30	20	10	*
6/1/07		66	18	48	34	22	13	*
4/15/07		66	20	45	34	20	14	*
2/25/07		65	20	44	35	25	10	*

Call for full trend.

25. (ASKED OF LEANED REPUBLICANS) Overall, how satisfied or dissatisfied are you with the choice of candidates for the Republican nomination for president next year - are you very satisfied, somewhat satisfied, somewhat dissatisfied or very dissatisfied?

	----- Satisfied -----			--- Dissatisfied ----			No opinion
	NET	Very	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Very	
7/17/11	54	8	46	38	29	10	8
6/5/11	47	7	40	46	38	9	7
4/17/11	43	5	38	40	30	10	17
11/1/07	69	16	54	28	22	7	2
9/7/07	68	19	49	26	21	6	5
7/21/07	65	13	53	32	26	6	3
6/1/07	68	11	56	28	22	6	4
4/15/07	65	16	49	31	27	5	3
2/25/07	73	14	58	24	20	5	3

26. (ASKED OF LEANED REPUBLICANS) If the 2012 Republican presidential primary or caucus in your state were being held today, and the candidates were (Michele Bachmann), (Herman Cain), (Newt Gingrich), (Jon Huntsman), (Sarah Palin), (Ron Paul), (Tim Pawlenty), (Rick Perry), (Mitt Romney), (Rick Santorum). For whom would you vote? Which candidate would you lean toward?

NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE

	AMONG RVs	
	7/17/11	7/17/11
Mitt Romney	26	26
Sarah Palin	18	16
Michele Bachmann	12	13
Ron Paul	9	7
Rick Perry	8	8
Herman Cain	6	7
Newt Gingrich	5	4
Jon Huntsman	3	3
Tim Pawlenty	2	2
Rick Santorum	2	2
Other (vol.)	1	1
No one/None of them (vol.)	1	1
Would not vote (vol.)	1	*
No opinion	8	8

27. (IF NAMED A CANDIDATE) Do you support (CANDIDATE) strongly, or somewhat?

	Strongly	Somewhat	No opinion
7/17/11	34	66	0
7/17/11 RV	35	65	0

	Strongly	Somewhat	No opinion
Mitt Romney	29	71	0

28. (IF WOULD VOTE FOR PALIN OR PERRY) If (PALIN/PERRY) does not run for president, for whom would you vote? Which candidate would you lean toward?

NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE

	---Without Palin----		----Without Perry---	
	AMONG RVs			
	7/17/11	7/17/11	7/17/11	7/17/11
Mitt Romney	30	30	28	28
Sarah Palin	NA	NA	19	17
Michele Bachmann	16	17	13	14
Ron Paul	11	10	10	8
Rick Perry	8	8	NA	NA
Herman Cain	7	7	7	7
Newt Gingrich	6	6	5	4

Jon Huntsman	3	3	3	3
Rick Santorum	3	3	3	3
Tim Pawlenty	3	3	2	2
Other (vol.)	1	1	1	1
No one/None of them (vol.)	2	2	1	2
Would not vote (vol.)	1	*	1	1
No opinion	8	9	8	8

29. (ASKED OF LEANED REPUBLICAN) Regardless of who you may support, which of the Republican candidates do you think [ITEM]? (IF NEEDED) I can repeat the list. Is it (Michele Bachmann), (Herman Cain), (Newt Gingrich), (Jon Huntsman), (Sarah Palin), (Ron Paul), (Tim Pawlenty), (Rick Perry), (Mitt Romney), or (Rick Santorum)?

Full item wording:

- a. is the strongest leader
- b. best understands the problems of people like you
- c. has the best experience to be president
- d. is the closest to you on the issues
- e. best reflects the core values of the Republican Party

7/17/11 - Summary Table

	Leader	Understands	Experience	Issues	Values
Mitt Romney	27	18	27	21	19
Sarah Palin	16	23	11	20	20
Michele Bachmann	8	11	7	10	11
Newt Gingrich	11	4	16	5	9
Ron Paul	5	9	6	10	8
Rick Perry	8	5	8	5	7
Herman Cain	4	5	3	5	4
Jon Huntsman	2	2	2	3	1
Tim Pawlenty	1	1	1	1	1
Rick Santorum	2	3	2	3	3
Other (vol.)	1	1	1	1	1
All of them (vol.)	*	1	2	*	*
Any 2 or more equally (vol.)	1	1	1	*	1
No one/None of them (vol.)	1	4	4	1	1
No opinion	13	12	11	15	14

7/17/11 - Summary Table among registered voters

	Leader	Understands	Experience	Issues	Values
Mitt Romney	27	18	28	20	18
Sarah Palin	14	21	9	17	19
Michele Bachmann	10	12	7	12	13
Newt Gingrich	11	3	14	5	9
Ron Paul	5	8	6	9	7
Rick Perry	9	5	8	5	7
Herman Cain	4	5	4	6	4
Jon Huntsman	3	3	3	3	1
Tim Pawlenty	1	2	1	1	1
Rick Santorum	2	3	2	3	3
Other (vol.)	1	1	1	2	1
All of them (vol.)	*	1	2	1	1
Any 2 or more equally (vol.)	1	1	1	*	1
No one/None of them (vol.)	1	5	4	1	1
No opinion	13	13	10	14	13

30. (ASKED OF LEANED REPUBLICANS) Now thinking ahead to November 2012: Which Republican presidential candidate do you think has the best chance to defeat Barack Obama in the general election? (IF NEEDED) I can repeat the list. Is it (Michele

Bachmann), (Herman Cain), (Newt Gingrich), (Jon Huntsman), (Sarah Palin), (Ron Paul), (Tim Pawlenty), (Rick Perry), (Mitt Romney), or (Rick Santorum)?

	AMONG RVs	
	7/17/11	7/17/11
Mitt Romney	32	32
Sarah Palin	14	12
Michele Bachmann	7	8
Rick Perry	6	7
Newt Gingrich	6	5
Ron Paul	3	3
Jon Huntsman	2	3
Herman Cain	2	2
Tim Pawlenty	2	2
Rick Santorum	1	2
Other (vol.)	1	1
All of them (vol.)	7	8
Any 2 or more equally (vol.)	2	2
None of them (vol.)	4	4
No opinion	11	10

31. If the 2012 presidential election were being held today and the candidates were (Barack Obama, the Democrat) and ([ITEM], the Republican), for whom would you vote? Would you lean toward (Obama) or toward (ITEM)?

NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE

7/17/11 - Summary Table

	Obama	Rep.	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
a. Mitt Romney	51	44	*	2	1	2
b. Ron Paul	53	41	*	2	1	3
c. Michele Bachmann	56	39	0	2	2	2
d. Rick Perry	55	38	*	2	1	4

NET LEANED VOTE PREFERENCE AMONG REGISTERED VOTERS

7/17/11 - Summary Table

	Obama	Rep.	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
a. Mitt Romney	49	47	*	2	1	1
b. Ron Paul	52	42	*	2	2	2
c. Michele Bachmann	55	40	0	2	2	2
d. Rick Perry	53	40	*	2	2	3

Trend where available:

a. Mitt Romney

	Obama	Romney	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
7/17/11	51	44	*	2	1	2
7/17/11 RV	49	47	*	2	1	1
6/5/11	47	47	*	2	1	2
6/5/11 RV	46	49	*	2	1	2
4/17/11	49	45	*	3	1	2

b. No trend.

c. Michele Bachmann

	Obama	Bachmann	Other (vol.)	Neither (vol.)	Would not vote (vol.)	No opinion
7/17/11	56	39	0	2	2	2

7/17/11 RV	55	40	0	2	2	2
6/5/11	52	39	*	3	2	4
6/5/11 RV	51	40	*	3	1	4
4/17/11	51	39	*	4	2	3

d. No trend.

32. On another subject: What is your view of the Tea Party political movement - would you say you support it strongly, support it somewhat, oppose it somewhat or oppose it strongly?

	----- Support -----			----- Oppose -----			No
	NET	Strongly	Somewhat	NET	Somewhat	Strongly	opinion
7/17/11	44	13	31	46	23	24	10
6/5/11	46	13	33	44	21	24	10
4/17/11	42	16	26	49	21	27	10

END