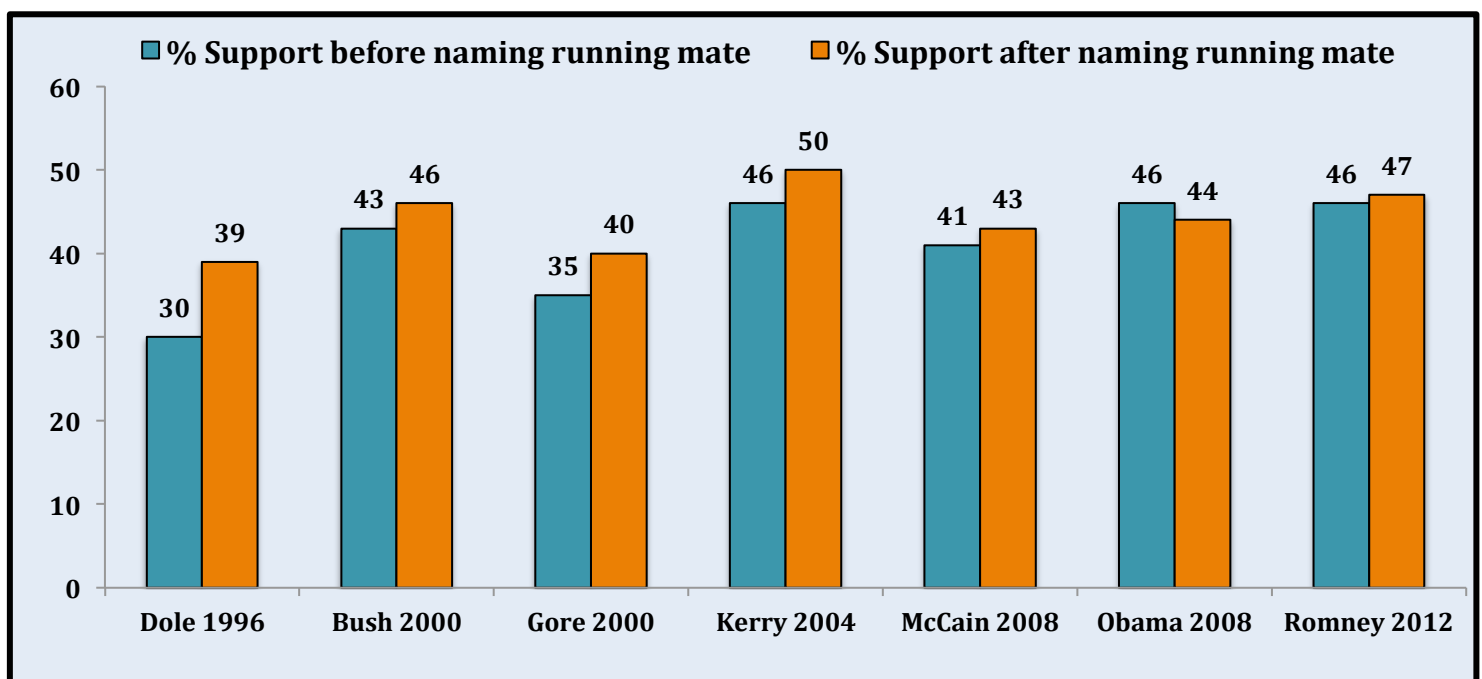


Don't Read Too Much Into VP Bounces: Months before Mitt Romney named Paul Ryan his running mate, pollsters and pundits speculated who would bring the “biggest bounce” to his campaign. This was all mostly for naught, considering vice presidential candidates have not decided an election in more than a half-century and have not had a significant impact on polls in recent years. Since 1996, presidential candidates have had an average shift of just three points in Gallup's daily [tracking](#) after announcing a running mate. In fact, three candidates (Dole, Gore, and Kerry) with the greatest poll improvement went on to lose the November contest.

Bob Dole had the largest bounce in 1996, moving from 30% to 39% after choosing Jack Kemp; Al Gore had the second-highest jump (35% to 40%) after Joe Lieberman joined him; and in 2004 John Kerry went up four points (46% to 50%) after picking John Edwards. George W. Bush, John McCain, and Barack Obama barely moved in polls after they made their picks. Mr. Obama's polls actually fell two points (45% to 44%) after Joe Biden joined the ticket. Mr. Romney's positive movement (from 46% to 47%) since Mr. Ryan joined the ticket is about average.

It is easy to put too much predicative value on the “VP bounce.” A running mate's biggest impact is in reinforcing the presidential candidate's themes, issues and message. By choosing Mr. Ryan, Mr. Romney signaled his belief that the race is about big ideas, and chose bold governing over politics.



Source: Historic Gallup Daily Tracking