

Is Donald Trump The Right Man For The Job?

It looks like Donald Trump will be the Republican Party nominee for the Presidential election to be held in 2024. Trump has a devout following that is committed to doing whatever it takes to reinstate him in the White House. Few would deny that Trump is a charismatic leader. His followers appear to be almost addicted to his aura. But does the fact that he has charisma mean that he is the right person for the job?

During the Second World War Dwight Eisenhower was picked to command the Allied forces in Europe not because he was an exciting leader with a sense of high drama but precisely because he wasn't. There were plenty of charismatic individuals around, such as Churchill, Montgomery, De Gaulle, and Patton. What was needed was somebody with toughness, stamina, good judgment, and ability to manage people. Just before the Normandy invasion in 1944, Eisenhower met with a group of officers who would be going into battle. He stretched out a piece of string on a table and pushed it a few inches with his finger and said, "An army is like this piece of string. No matter which way you push it, you end up pulling it. Soldiers must be led from the front, not pushed from behind." Eisenhower may not have been colourful, but he could get his point across in a way everyone could understand. He had character in the true sense.

Although he has declared himself to be one of the best Presidents America has ever had, by comparison to Eisenhower, or even other Republican Presidents such as Lincoln and Reagan, most observers would say Trump does not make the grade. This illustrates one of the key problems in the United States today—the confusion between character and charisma. And that can make a colossal difference not only in America but abroad as well, for example in the wars in Ukraine and Israel today. It is therefore worthwhile to explore this confusion to determine how it may impact all of us.

A review of any dictionary will tell you that character comes from a Greek word meaning chisel, or the mark left by a chisel. A chisel is a sharp steel tool used for making a sculpture out of a hard material like granite or marble. A chisel is also used for stripping away waste material from an object leaving only what matters. Charisma, on the other hand, is derived from a Greek word meaning an ability to elicit favor in other people. It is a magnetic quality of personality that people respond to as if mesmerised or in a

hypnotic trance. Charisma is almost like a magic wand that confers power over others.

The late Jim Rohn, known widely as America's leading business philosopher, presented a very useful outline of the difference between character and charisma in his presentations. As Rohn pointed out in his audio series on the subject, "Character does not refer to other people. It does not refer to having power over other people, getting other people to follow you, or gaining favor with other people. Character is something that you have and that you are. You could be marooned on a desert island and your character would still be important." Rohn then explained, "But charisma would do you no good at all. Charisma requires the presence of others while character is all about you. Character is the person you are after you have chiseled and have removed all the unnecessary material that is underneath."

A charismatic person can inspire devoted or even fanatical loyalty. But it is a quality of character for a leader to refrain from making himself or herself the indispensable heart and soul of an organization. People of character are usually well-loved by everyone around them. But they make it clear that their first love is for the truth, even if it hurts. As Rohn points out, "In short, character is what's left after charisma is gone. The essential point is that character is not something that just happens by itself any more than a chisel can create a work of art without the hand of an artist guiding it." He adds, "Character is the result of hundreds and hundreds of choices you may make that gradually turn who you are at any given moment into who you want to be." You build character out of certain qualities that you must create and diligently nurture within yourself. Qualities like integrity, honesty, sincerity, courage, and devotion to the truth.

Earlier, we referred to some of America's best presidents. These presidents played key roles in American history. Eisenhower led America to victory in World War II. Lincoln led America through the darkness of its civil war. Reagan led America in the demise of the Soviet Union. When America needed leaders of stature these were the leaders that rose to the occasion. Today, America faces many serious challenges. It is dealing with two wars abroad. It is trying to address climate challenge that has been projected to be devastating. It is trying to confront political deadlock in Congress. Economic inequality and racial injustice are matters that have divided the country. Would Trump be the kind of leader that could rise to these challenges? Does he display the kind of character needed to address these problems?

Anyone who studies him carefully soon realizes that Trump is mainly animated by self-interest. He displays narcissistic [tendencies](#), including a lack of empathy for others, such as was on display with the natural disaster in [Puerto Rico](#). He evades criticism and appears to be incapable of assuming responsibility for anything that has not worked out, most clearly evident by over [60 court cases](#) that he initiated that all failed to overturn his presidential election loss. Instead, he invariably blames others. The Washington Post that maintained a "Fact Checker" during Donald Trump's presidency found that Trump and his administration made over 30,000 false or misleading [claims](#).

Trump frequently clashed with the media, accusing it of bias and promoting the term "fake news," without sufficient regard for truthful reporting which critics argue undermined trust in journalism and the free press. Trump's attacks on CNN's Jim Acosta as documented in Acosta's *The Enemy of the People* [book](#) come to mind in this regard. Trump's comments and tweets have been regarded by many as insensitive or offensive to certain groups of people: for example his sexual innuendos related to [Megyn Kelly](#) of Fox News, or uncalled-for disparaging [comments](#) about Mika Brzezinski of MSNBC, other [denigrating references](#) to women, discriminatory policy initiatives toward minorities such as [Muslims](#), and allegations of criminality about immigrants from [Mexico](#). Critics have noted instances where Trump's behavior did not conform to traditional presidential decorum and standards such as when he [cut off the Queen](#) of England while walking or pushed his way [forward](#) at a G-20 leadership photo. Trump's approach to the COVID-19 pandemic, including [downplaying](#) its severity and promoting [unproven treatments](#), has been criticized as ineffective, false, and dangerous. As of the moment, Donald Trump faces over 90 criminal [felony counts](#) under which, in each instance, Trump could end up in prison if convicted.

Taking all this into account, Trump's character does not appear to stand up well in comparison to the other presidents we have talked about. He dismisses all of it as a "witch hunt" thereby again evidencing a lack of responsibility. Indeed, were it not for his charisma, few people would likely want to deal with him. Yet Trump leads the Republican race and what is more, controls the House through his appointment of Mike Johnson as Speaker. That can be very worrisome for America.

Given his self-interest and his affection for Putin, a reinstatement of Donald Trump as President of America is likely to result in an isolationist foreign policy. Anyone familiar with the history of World War II will know that just

like an emboldened Hitler moved against the Sudetenland, and then Poland, an emboldened Putin fed by an isolationist U.S. foreign policy will seek concessions from NATO and lead to a new conflict in Eastern Europe. But this time it will involve soldiers from Europe and America. Indeed, Putin won't hesitate to play to Trump's vanity to achieve Moscow's complete victory in Ukraine and elsewhere. As for Israel, Russia's support of Hamas, including funding, military support and Wagner training of Hamas troops is not something Trump is likely to raise with Putin or oppose.

That is the danger of an election of Donald Trump again to the presidency. It is a danger no American, indeed no supporter of democracy can afford. Neither for the sake of America, or Ukraine or Israel can we allow that to happen.



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