

I'm Mr. Beat, and who the heck do you think YOU are? Huh?

Oh. Ok. Well I believe you then.

Anyway, the President of the United States. (gesturing)

The one in charge of the executive branch of the federal government of the United States. The commander-in-chief of the federal troops....who has the final say on what the military does. The one who enforces all the federal laws, who signs bills into laws...or vetoes them if they think they stink. The one who often is the symbol that represents not only an entire political party, but is the one person that represents the ENTIRE COUNTRY to the rest of the world.

Not only does everybody in the world seem to know ABOUT the President of the United States, but they also seem to have strong OPINIONS about them.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=HF5PxDO3ZCQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BQZ9ORRurTY> 3:20

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uVvmsuKubQ>

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GGnd-mQdhS0>

https://www.youtube.com/shorts/VxY_6L-Zk_A

<https://www.youtube.com/shorts/4dOCdC1EQv0>

Yeah, most Americans don't vote on Election Day. Less than 15% usually show up to vote in local elections.¹ Less than 47% showed up to vote in midterm elections in 2022. But nearly 67% of Americans showed up to vote the last time there was a presidential election.² When a president is on the ballot, all of a sudden everybody's like "ok, let's freaking do this, man!"

It's true. Most Americans likely don't know the names of everyone on their local school board or city council. Heck, they probably don't even know the names of their U.S. Senators or U.S. Representatives. (ridiculous zoom) But they know who the president is.

Everybody these days seems to care about who the president of the United States is because that job is a pretty big freaking deal. (ridiculous zoom) It wasn't always this way. Hey, will you please stop it with these ridiculous zooms? Thank you.

It didn't used to be. The power of the presidency has dramatically grown since George Washington became the country's first president 235 years ago. Today, being an American president is arguably the most powerful job in the world. It's also one of the most DIFFICULT jobs in the world. I'm sure it's no surprise to you that leading the world's only remaining superpower is incredibly stressful. In one year, an American president often ages four years. I mean, just look at these first year of being President portraits versus last year of being President portraits.

Ok so maybe that one's not a good example there.

¹ <https://www.carnegie.org/our-work/article/visualizing-voter-turnout-local-school-board-elections/>

² https://ballotpedia.org/Voter_turnout_in_United_States_elections

Anyway, I've been making videos about the Presidents of the United States of America...no not the band, the ACTUAL presidents of the United States of America....for more than 13 years. Geez. I've made documentaries about several of the presidents. I've made a video about every single American presidential election. I've repeatedly ranked the presidents. By the way, it's already time again to update those rankings. Heck, I've even made SONGS about all of the presidents.

For these reasons, I've gained a reputation over the years as the American Presidents dude on YouTube. (turning) Which is fine. Put it on my gravestone. Whatever. (turning)

But over the past 13 years, not once have I ever made a video about what MAKES A GOOD PRESIDENT. Sure, I've explained why I like certain presidents in those rankings videos, but I've never tried to synthesize a broader explanation. After all, what makes a "good" president, you might assume, is subjective.

Or is it? (Vsauce music) Hey stop it with that.

Obviously, the presidency is a leadership position, but ok...what makes a good leader?!? That's subjective, too, man.

In this video, I'm gonna break down what both the experts and ordinary people generally say makes a great president.

Ok, so what are the qualities that make a good president? Again, most Americans can specifically name their favorite presidents, but when it comes to explaining exactly why, things get a bit murky.

Well based on my research, meaning looking at what both the experts and what ordinary citizens have to say, here are the TEN main qualities that people generally think makes a good president.

(Turning) Oh and "experts" in this case meaning American presidential historians.

#1 Honesty

A good president tells the truth, even when people don't want to hear the truth...or they (can't handle the truth). A good president tells the truth even if it hurts their OWN popularity. People believe what they want to believe, after all, but a good president realizes that telling people what they want to hear is not always gonna help them. The truth can hurt.

Now, it can be difficult these days to determine what's the truth. (turning) There's just so much misinformation and disinformation coming at us at like 100 miles per hour. It can be overwhelming. (turning) I even made a 30-minute long video trying to explain how to find out the

truth, but many of you didn't watch THAT video because IT was overwhelming. Oh but hey. I guess this is a perfect time to talk about the sponsor of this video, Ground News.

Ground News is a website and app that helps you get an easy, data-driven, objective way to read the news. Every story comes with a quick visual breakdown of the political bias, factuality and ownership of the sources reporting - all backed by ratings from three independent news monitoring organizations. It gathers articles from over 50,000 news sources from around the world. I've been using Ground News for years now to help me break out of my echo chambers.

I love looking at the Blindspot feed. Here's an example of a story from it about the recent prisoner swap between the United States and Russia.

This story has been covered by more than 50 news sources. 26% of coverage is from the right and just 16% is from the left (show Coverage Details and Bias Distribution). 79% of the sources are high factuality and 10% of the sources are independent news (show Factuality and Ownership). I can also read every article and compare headlines to see how this issue is being framed across the political spectrum. Most of the headlines focus on Russia acknowledging intelligence operatives were among those freed. However, a source in the center uniquely focused on the freed dissidents vowing to keep up their fight against Putin, while multiple outlets on the right highlighted the swap included a hitman.

With Ground News, you develop a well-rounded worldview and get some of the complexity behind the headlines. Go to ground.news/mrbeat to subscribe through my link for 40% off unlimited access with their Vantage Plan- the same plan I use. Subscribing means you're directly supporting an independent platform dedicated to restoring facts, transparency, and trust in the news.

Well that sponsorship worked out pretty well. Pat myself on the back there. This video. What was this video about? Back to what makes a good president.

Honesty. If you're consistently honest, people are more likely to believe you in the future. If you constantly lie, people are more likely to NOT believe you in the future.

And it's hard to be an effective president if few people trust you.

#2 Willingness to Listen

A good president is a good listener. They listen just as much, if not more than they speak. They consider as many different perspectives as possible, especially those perspectives that are much different than their own. A good president TRUSTS the opinions of the American public.

This means they have to often show humility. A good president goes out of their way to hear what they often don't want to hear. This often means surrounding themselves with advisors who have different viewpoints.

Hey, related to this...

#3 Openness to Change

This means being willing to admit when they made a mistake and choosing to learn from that mistake. A good president is not married to one ideology, nor are they an ideologue. Their beliefs can actually change based on new information. They are constantly questioning themselves.

7:31 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IL8pNRdYHrI>

#4 Disciplined

A good president has excellent self control. They know when to hold back, especially when it comes to trying to increase their own power. It's often just as important for a president to know when to NOT ACT as to know when TO act.

A good president knows how to keep their emotions in check. They set a clear boundary between their professional life and personal life. Look, presidents are humans. There is simply no evidence proving they are lizard people. And I'm not a lizard, either. Come on! They have days where they are in a bad mood, where things aren't going well. But good presidents rarely let personal problems affect how they govern.

They find a balance in everything, from their daily schedule to what they need to prioritize in terms of domestic and foreign policy.

#5 Principled

Often this one's about having strong morals, often revolving around the principle of treating others as one would want to be treated by them. AKA reciprocity. AKA THE GOLDEN RULE, BABY. However, sometimes it can be difficult to determine what exactly is harmful or beneficial to others. What's harmful to one person might be beneficial to another person.

Therefore, being principled really is about being morally CONSISTENT. Not only does a good president have strong morals, but these morals are reliable enough so that we could easily predict how a president would act in any new situation.

#6 Decisiveness

A good president makes decisions quickly and confidently. They don't waver. Simply put, they act boldly. That said, I should say that just because they make a decision quickly and confidently, doesn't mean they're making the RIGHT decision. However, if a president has all these other main qualities they likely won't make the wrong decision. Just sayin'.

#7 Pragmatic

A good president knows when to stop being idealistic when important stuff needs to get done. They embrace compromise and coalitions, but only if these compromises and coalitions DON'T go against their principles. They constantly consider the practical consequences of their actions. Simply put, a good president doesn't try to run away from reality.

#8 Empathetic

3:56 <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nOAuka9O3yI>

A good president is able to truly understand the feelings of all other human beings, no matter how wildly different that human being may be. They have compassion for all. They want to help EVERY human, not just their favorite humans.

They have empathy for not just humans, but for ALL other creatures, although it's important to put humans first. Humans are first priority, and any president who DEHUMANIZES any group is definitely not a good president. Now, I should say that this is a relatively new idea- there's a long history of world leaders dehumanizing others, including most American presidents. Yes, you heard it here first. Most American presidents suck. (turning) I mean, come on. I'm being facetious here. It's all complex. I still like Thomas Jefferson please don't come at me bro.

#9 Courageous

A good president is bold enough to do something when they know it's going to hurt them personally. They have integrity, meaning they're gonna do what's right no matter who is around them or who benefits.

A good president doesn't hide from a crisis. In fact, they seem to embrace it.

#10 Effective Communicator

Yeah, this is a biggie. I mean, you just have to be able to communicate with people. Being an effective communicator starts with having general knowledge. At the very least, a good president knows a little bit about a lot. A good president doesn't have to be an expert about NASCAR, but by golly they better at least know who Dale Earnhardt was and why he was important. And, of course, they must have a general knowledge of all political positions, especially if they DISAGREE with these political positions.

And perhaps this is obvious, but a president must be easily understood. Like, do you understand the words that are coming out of my mouth?

They must have an inspirational message. They must not only be able to get the American public to listen to them, but their colleagues and their staff. They must be able to get other world leaders to listen to and understand them. Good presidents get other world leaders to even AGREE with them.

So yeah, persuasiveness is important. A good president is charismatic and a master at rhetoric. After all, often the most powerful people in world history were just good at communicating.

So that's it. Based on my research, if a president IS all of these ten things, they'll be considered a great leader. If they are all ten of these things, they'll get a lot of stuff done that helps a lot of people. Now, it's important to acknowledge there are qualities that didn't make this list that historians have mentioned due to either the fact that I think they already strongly related to the qualities I listed OR I just personally think they are overrated. For example, C-SPAN's Survey of Presidential Leadership mentions stuff like "Economic Management," "Administrative Skills," and "Performance Within Context of Times." But ya know what? CSPAN can eat a big laundry basket full of spaghetti-O's.

Uh yeah. Anyway, just know that historians have expanded on my 10 qualities list, and if you're being honest, willing to listen, open to change, disciplined, principled, decisive, pragmatic, empathetic, courageous, and want to be a better communicator, you really ought to learn more. Sources, as always, are in the description of this video.

I'll wrap up by saying that often we truly don't know who was actually a good president until after many years have passed since they left office.

There's A LOT of decisions they have to make behind the scenes. Often corporate media and social media is focused on the sensational or scandalous stuff, and we don't get the full picture of what happened until long after the dust has settled. This explains why someone like Abraham Lincoln, who was widely unpopular when he first became president, now is widely considered to be the greatest president.³

It makes me wonder (looking up at four last presidents)...who is unpopular today but will one day be considered a good president by the majority of people? (awkward) Ok, goodness. That was a rhetorical question.

But what do YOU think makes a good president? You may disagree with this entire list, after all (turning) you punk. (turning) Let me know down below. Hey, a shout out to Andre Dutra for appearing in this video. Be sure to subscribe to his phenomenal American political history channel. I mean, come on. It's great. I've linked it below.

I recently appeared on a podcast called FDR's Wheelchair to expand more on what I think makes a good president. The link is in the description. Also, if you look over here, there should be a playlist with a bunch of my American Presidents videos, and a video in which I rank all the

³ <https://www.battlefields.org/learn/articles/evidence-unpopular-mr-lincoln>

Presidents on a Tier List with Vlogging Through History. If they're not over there, somebody stole them.

I also appeared on a podcast to talk about this very topic! Check it out here?

<https://open.spotify.com/episode/0bQhDNI1nS9OKjvZgGjv5P?si=0LUBQI8WQuaMI3PBGikCmQ&nd=1&dlsi=abeec2b57b7043b5>

Sources/further reading or watching:

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