



Job Posting: President of the United States

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The role of the President of the United States should not be as complicated as people make it out to be. After all, it is a job just like any other job. If the position is addressed dispassionately, there is a job description that is easily understood, easily communicated and relatively easy to train, depending upon the successful applicant. And if the job description is clear enough, the person who takes the position should understand the responsibilities and upon what criteria the new employee is being measured. Therefore, his or her ability to successfully and effectively fill this position should be demonstrable and manageable. Feedback should be continuous, impartial and proactive.

There should be an overall mission for this position just like with any job. If I am a cashier at a grocery store, my mission is to accurately tally up those products that have been selected by the customer and then to collect money in whatever manner is acceptable in an amount equal to what is owed. If change is required, I will distribute the difference between what is provided and what is owed to the company back to the customer with a cheerful disposition. Lastly, I want to package the groceries and ensure the customer leaves satisfied that he or she has received the goods and paid a fair price. I will thank the customer for choosing my store. I want them to come back again.

The office of the president should have a similar mission. While filling the position, that person needs to execute the responsibilities outlined in his or her job description in a manner that is deferential and customer-focused. The employee should maintain a professional and impartial manner. Customer service is a primary function, simply meaning that executing the job description should be done in a way that makes the customer happy. If done well, the president will be reelected. As with the cashier who wants existing customers to return and even more new customers to choose his or her store, the president wants to garner more votes the second time around.

As far as experience and background, that is important but I suggest it is not the most critical trait. As I have mentioned in a previous blog, the president must be able to hire other people who have the background and experience necessary for their particular functions, such as diplomacy, finance, human rights, defense, etc. For this reason, I will gloss over the experience requirement and refer the reader instead to my earlier writings.

Good communication skills are paramount. Blurting anything out without forethought is just wrong, talking too much is a recipe for confusion. Be concise, don't be sarcastic or clever. Better yet, hire a good speech writer and communications director; avoid winging it entirely. Stay off social media, for pete's sake.

Differing with many opinions, I feel the president needs to be, in terms of rendering judgment and enacting policy, a centrist. Perhaps he or she had to cater to the Republican or the Democrat parties in order to corral the influence and resources of those juggernauts of partisan-ism, or perhaps a third party, but once in office, the president needs to shed those identities and serve all of us. That is a requirement. Leave the polarized politics to the parties and govern all of the people all of the time. Thank you.

The president must be a facilitator, able to get things done by encouraging and leading others to do things. This is not easy, but becomes easier if the president assumes the role of centrist by design and definition. Facilitating people and systems that will at times be diametrically- and philosophically-opposed is an art and a science and the individual needs to come to the job with this character trait firmly entrenched in his or her DNA; it cannot be learned on the job. There must always be a focus on the big picture, the president cannot dwell in the weeds. Not only must the president be able to facilitate those in Congress but also those in the press and, at the end of the day those of us who represent the other 99% of America. It is not easy, which is why it is such an important feature to have and to have used many many times in the past.

The president must understand the responsibility that comes with allocating our finances. The money is not his or hers. Yes, I understand that the Congress holds the powers of the purse but, in most cases, the president is the one directing the container ship upon which the purse travels. I am not saying, necessarily, that the president must be a fiscal conservative although it helps. Money must be spent. However, it can also be saved and spent more wisely. Throwing money at the latest "thing" may not be prudent nor expeditious. Thought must be given, and time allocated for thinking to ensure that we are not penny wise and pound foolish.

The president must carry a good balance between extroversion and introversion. I understand that he or she made it to the office on individual acumen for pleasing the masses and the ability to handle the Broadway extravaganza that is the elective process. However, once in office, the quick and clever response needs to be tempered for one that is properly conceived, based on facts and "appropriate" deliberation. He or she should avoid spontaneous and reflexive action but also shy away from bureaucratic and taciturn inertia. There must always be action, leaning forward and, as per a time-tested military reference, "to stay at least two terrain features ahead". The president must have the inclination and patience to discuss multiple courses of action and consequence before moving forward.

The president must also maintain an internal moral compass that is not necessarily fixed at all costs on magnetic north but is focused and pointed towards what is Right in the truest form, oftentimes a moving target. Sympathy and empathy need to be traits that are easily accessible in the quiver of the person who holds the title of the President of the United States. That being said, the president represents over 300 million people so decisions cannot be made simply based on momentary emotions. They need to be part of the formula for decision-making but the recipe for making the Right decisions has many diverse and often wonderfully contrasting ingredients.

The president and commander-in-chief must understand with full conviction the gravity of the position. He or she will be called on during the four- or eight-year timeframe that he or she is occupying this position to severely influence the lives of individuals and groups of people under his or her command. Either directly or indirectly, Americans will die based on decisions made by this person so he or she better have the stomach, the heart, the brain and the spirit to make these decisions properly. Do not make half-assed, seat-of-the-pants decisions based on social media posts or opinion polls when it comes to our soldiers and first responders. Take the time and grab your moral compass before issuing orders and proclaim your decision with the solemnity and respect due to those who may have to pay the ultimate price. Bottom line, those candidates with excessive supplies of hubris, personal ambition or thin skins need not apply.

And finally, the person who applies for President of the United States must want to do the job. Get excited that you are responsible for the lives of so many people and that you are the best qualified to make positive changes to your country and the world. Do not run for president to win. Winning is only the beginning but I fear that many view it as the end; become president and work out the details later. Wrong answer. Run for president for the Right reasons. Review this checklist and make sure you have what it takes. There is no last-minute preparation, don't grab the Cliff Notes or look over your opponent's shoulder. You either have it or you don't.

Let's get started.