

Jfk: the epitome of success

Psychology, Success



" Once you say you're going to settle for second, that's what happens to you in life." This quote was said by and embodied by a man who was very effective and smoothly functioning in life. This man was the late John F. Kennedy. JFK was one of the most successful and influential people to ever live. He had strong beliefs and never succumbed to pressure. Kennedy's success was shown through his tough foreign and economic policies. JFK kept the USA as a world powerhouse and will forever be remembered as one of the greatest presidents to ever live.

Kennedy was born in Brookline, Massachusetts on Tuesday, May 29, 1917. He spent the first ten years of his life in Brookline until he moved with his family to Riverdale, Bronx. Two years after that he moved to a 21-room mansion on a six-acre estate in Bronxville, New York. JFK had a very sickly childhood dealing with appendicitis, colitis, and possible symptoms of leukemia. In September 1936 he enrolled as a freshman at Harvard College where he eventually graduated cum laude with a degree in international affairs. Kennedy then spent four years in the US Navy during World War II. Before his political career, JFK originally aspired to become a journalist. However, in 1946, Kennedy ran for a vacated U. S. Representative seat and beat his opponent by a large margin. On January 2, 1960, Kennedy officially declared his intent to run for President of the United States. It was a tight race against Richard Nixon but JFK won and was sworn in as the 35th President at noon on January 20, 1961 (Kelly).

At Kennedy's inaugural address, he spoke of the need for all Americans to be active citizens, famously saying, " Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." JFK felt that all

the responsibility should not rest in the hands of the government; instead it should be shared amongst all Americans. He also spoke of his hope for unity amongst the nations in order to end "tyranny, poverty, disease, and war itself" across the world. His inaugural address alone showed signs of future success for this young president. JFK immediately gained great popular support amongst Americans. His strong-willed personality and hope for change were some of the many reasons for his success. Little did he know his abilities would be tested early in his presidential term.

In October of 1962, a Soviet ballistic missile site was discovered under construction in Cuba. JFK was faced with a dilemma; attack the missile site and face a possible nuclear war with the Soviets, or stand down and risk a nuclear attack on the U. S. Another consideration was that if the U. S. backed down it would appear to the world as weak in its own hemisphere. Kennedy decided to take action and ordered a naval quarantine in which the U. S. Navy inspected all ships arriving in Cuba. He began negotiations with the Soviets and ordered the Soviets to remove all defensive material that was being built in Cuba. Kennedy's risky actions proved successful as Khrushchev agreed to remove the missiles subject to U. N. inspections if the U. S. publicly promised never to invade Cuba and quietly removed US missiles stationed in Turkey (Sierra). JFK's iron-willed actions prevented a possible all-out nuclear war with the U. S. S. R.

Not only was JFK strong-minded with his foreign policy, he was also forceful with his economic policy. His plan entitled the "New Frontier" ambitiously promised federal funding for education, medical care for the elderly, and

government intervention to halt the recession (Rosenthal). Kennedy also promised an end to racial discrimination. In 1954 the United States Supreme Court had ruled in *Brown v. Board of Education* that racial segregation in public schools was unconstitutional. Despite public opposition Kennedy did what was right and made sure this ruling would be upheld throughout the country. In 1962, James Meredith tried to enroll at the University of Mississippi, but he was prevented from doing so by white students. Kennedy responded by sending some 400 federal marshals and 3,000 troops to ensure that Meredith could enroll in his first class. He was a very caring president and would do anything to enforce justice. Kennedy's determination and perseverance helped end segregation in our great nation.

Another great example of Kennedy's strong-willed personality is shown through the space race of the 1960's. After recent Soviet success of space exploration, JFK felt the need to put the U. S. on the map in terms of space discovery. Kennedy asked Congress to approve more than \$25 billion for the Apollo Project, a human spaceflight program undertaken by NASA with the goal of conducting manned moon landing missions (Dumoulin). Not only did JFK feel that landing a man on the moon would benefit science, but that it would create nationalism and make a statement to the world that America was on top. Unfortunately, Kennedy wouldn't live to see his Apollo project take place.

On November 22, 1963, while on a political trip to Texas, Kennedy was shot twice and pronounced dead at 1:00 PM. At the age of 46, President Kennedy died younger than any U. S. president to date. Despite Kennedy's short term

as President, he is still considered as one of the greatest. His success can be attributed to his strong willed personality and determination in everything he did. JFK was the epitome of a successful and effective individual.