

Hardball essay

Countries, United States



Hardball Essay The political game is a dog eat dog world, there are several factors that determined whether a politician will be successful or not. Having alliances, enemies, and deals is all part of it. In the book “ Hardball: How Politics is Played” written by Chris Mathews explains what it takes to get ahead in politics and how to avoid disasters techniques previously used by others. “ It’s not who you know; it’s who you get to know. ” Forming alliances is very important when trying to climb the ladder higher in politics. In 1949 LBJ joined the senate and by the end of 1952 he had won the job of top Democratic leader.

Before anything of this happened LBJ had a plan to achieve this, and it is called the “ Johnson treatment”. It is when one goes one customer at a time, in order to feel the customer’s important. This in turn got LBJ a lot of support because of all the people he was able to communicate with on a personal level. The smaller the group to retail is always better. Clinton wasted no time getting to know as many as possible. He began to run for freshman class president on his first of campus, started networking at Oxford and Yale law school.

He also volunteered in the 1972 presidential campaign of George McGovern, by the time Clinton ran for US Congress in 1974 he already had many connections under his belt. Niccolo Machiavelli warned future politicians in 1513 to stay close to people they are ruling. Three centuries later, Tomas P “ Tip” O’ Neill coined the term, “ all politics are local”. He understood that in order to be a successful politician, he had to appeal to the simple, mundane and everyday concerns of those who elect them into office.

Those personal issues, rather than big and intangible ideas, are often what voters care most about, according to this principle. In 1950 when Congressman Richard Nixon was running for the US Senate from California, he was running up against actress Helen Gahagan Douglas. Nixon needed to form an alliance with Earl Warren but he was against the idea. Mrs. Douglas was encouraging Warren's neutrality by not endorsing the Democratic candidate. Nixon's people saw an opening, they would appeal not to his party but to his heart: Earl Warren.

Nixon set up a trap and worked, he would never win Warren's friendship but nonetheless won his help and that's what was most important. "It matters little what terrain you are competing on; the key to winning over allies is to focus on their sensitive points". A politician will have enemies because of their different point of view on certain issue. Good politicians shake hands with their enemies and easily talk with them. LBJ once said, "Better to have 'em inside the tent pissin' out than outside pissin in. During the time Lincoln was president he had an entire administration filled with people who were angry and all felt that they'd make a better president him. This is smart because once you have your enemies working with you they can't bad mouth you and their interests collide with yours. Having enemies work for you makes people trust you, because it gives off the impression you're open minded. Politician use ridicule in order to bring down their opponent, so it's best if one come up with a quick witty remark because ignoring it is the worst possible thing one can do.

It proves to people that the statement is true. Jimmy Carter ignored the “Keep your enemies in front of you” rule and paid for it dearly. Having defeated the Democratic establishment on his way to the Oval Office, Carter soon found out that same establishment was rooting for his downfall. His own administration had cut off. Frustration and anger is a factor that can deter a politician from getting ahead in the world of politics. Nelson Mandela spent 27 years in jail and later became president of South Africa. When Nelson Mandela was made prime minister of South Africa, he didn't hold a grudge that he had been imprisoned but rather worked past it. Francis Patrick Sullivan was a whole different story. He had the goal to one day land a job on Capitol Hill, his problem was that he thought that by meeting with congressmen at nightspot would charm them. Professionals like to keep their private and office life separated. He was managing a House campaign, make Herbie a winner. A day later Herbie told Sullivan that he wasn't cut out for politics.

This ruined Sullivan; he spent years drinking and even changed political parties in order to go against Herbie. A lot of politicians their lives have been obsessively focused on a single bad break, in order to survive and grow as a professional one should use those bad experiences and use them to avoid a future mishap. Revenge never leads to anything good. Once again never ignore an insult, to the public that can be seen as an admission of guilt. Respond to attacks immediately and don't let them get away with anything.

Dukakis was accused of being a bleeding heart liberal and then went to an interview and said he wouldn't push the death penalty on someone who

raped and killed a girl. Since he didn't respond to the attack, it made it worse he had to pay the price. There are three tactics to ruin someone. 1) Catch 'em in a lie Daniel Moynihan won an election by catching inconsistencies in his opponents' stories. 2) Ridicule When FDR was accused of sending a military destroyer to find his dog Fala, he gave his famous "Fala" speech that made his opponents look stupid 3) Jujitsu, "Force of the opponents own attack to bring him down. When Texan Jack Brooks was accused of being a Communist, he said he'd shoot the next man who called him a Red. Silence is the ultimate weapon of power. You should always have your ears open and ask everyone around you to tell you everything. There are several different examples where silence proves to topple sound. Tip O'Neill was a big fan of this rule. Newt Gingrich, his successor, failed to do this and allowed press in conferences, which led to his name being associated with bad news amongst the public. Lyndon Johnson said "I ain't never learned nothing' talkin. Churchill became prime minister because he remained silent and forced the previous prime minister to speak freely about his wanting Churchill to advance. JFK's silence helped him in the missile crisis. Sometime when you give someone the satisfaction of telling them they're right, you can get them to concede on the more important tangible issues. Being able to survive and being a good politician are two completely different things. Chris Matthews explained this in his book. The game of politics has a lot of different strategies not sometime work and other times don't. Only a good politician would know what to do.