

# Shakespeare

Literature



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High positions of leadership require individuals who have high integrity and possess a strong character. Leaders are individuals who will be able to guide their followers or subordinates in ensuring that they complete a given task or achieve a given mission and vision. That is why leaders must be good character so that they can act as an example to their followers. Without good leadership nothing can be achieved and this may result in people getting disgruntled and eventually losing faith in the directions and instructions being given by their leaders. In the discipline forces authority and order matter most. To ensure that people in the disciplined forces are able to take orders from their leaders, they must foremost respect. If they do not respect their leaders who guide them, they cannot follow their instructions and will disregard them. Passing over Iago in the promotion to be a lieutenant by Othello seems to be a justified a justified decision and this paper will illustrate some of the character flaws which could not allow Iago to be a great leader. Iago is the most heinous villain and he is depicted as fascinating by his terrible character traits. His actions lack the convincing motivation and this leads to Othello passing him over in attaining the position of lieutenant. Iago is not fit for the leadership position as he is at the forefront in spreading rumors without ascertaining the facts. By mere thought he starts accusing his wife of cheating on him with Othello. This is an issue which he should have resolved by first obtaining the facts then making a proper claim. However, he goes forth to tell other people that he thinks his wife was cheating on him. This is a complete flaw of character which is not expected from a leader the caliber of Iago. Iago even goes further in declaring on how much he lust's for Desdemona who is the wife of Othello (Shakespeare, p. 93). This action is a mockery to his leadership position as it

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portrays him as revengeful. A leader should not be revengeful but can only offer due punishment for any wrong action. Iago brings up personal matters which none of these actions explicitly explain why Iago hates Othello so much. Iago has the willingness to take revenge on everyone- Emilia, Roderigo, Cassio, Desdemona, and Othello. His pleasure is to see people suffering and this is not what is expected of a leader. Iago has manipulative abilities and this is illustrated with his encounter with Roderigo. His encounters with the foolish Roderigo show how he derives joy from ridiculing other people. He winks at the audience as revels from his own skills. The interactions between the two also reveal the character flow of Iago which is cowardice. These acts of cowardice from Iago are finally revealed in the last scene when he murders his own wife. A leader should not lose self control and respect. All this is lost by Iago when he murders his own wife. What might have also led to all this must have been the general hatred that Iago had towards women. This in itself is terrifying as leaders who should be protecting people should not hold any prejudice against anybody. This is an indication of the chauvinism exhibited by Iago which does not befit any leader in any given society. Leaders should also be people of high moral integrity. However from the play, there are signs that some of the underlying motive in Iago's entire motive was the homosexual love he had for the general. Iago enjoys denying Othello his marital happiness (Shakespeare, p. 156). His jealousy and desire to watch other people have miserable lives makes him to always declare his love for Othello effusively and frequently. Iago makes himself a powerful and compelling figure by using his talents inappropriately. Iago is talented in manipulating and understanding the desires of the people who are around him. He uses this inappropriately which

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is wrong as he should use this in helping his people in the society and community. All this illustrated when Iago takes Emilia's handkerchief knowing that he can use it to deflect her questions (Shakespeare, p. 67). Iago then tells Othello all about the handkerchief with confidence as he knows that he cannot be doubted. Leaders in every society should be trusted by the people that they lead. However, with all the deceit that Iago has, he cannot be trusted to lead his people. All the character flaws elaborated above shows why it was a correct decision that Iago was not promoted to be a lieutenant but in his place a more capable person in the form of Othello was placed at the helm. Even though Othello has his own character flaws he was a much better person than Iago. Leaders should be individuals who can be trusted by the whole society. For any individual to gain the respect that they deserve as leaders they must be of good character. Iago has bad character traits and it was appropriate that he was passed over for the post of lieutenant. Works Cited Shakespeare, William. *The Tragedy of Othello, the Moor of Venice*. London: Thomas Walkey; 1622