

# A review on nelson mandela history essay



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

Nelson Mandela, the first democratic South Africa president was not just a great leader due to her leadership skills and traits, but also because he was a leader with a vision, persistence and courage. He is considered one of the greatest leaders of 21st century and a hero to many for his actions and personality. Nelson is a great leader, a leader other modern leaders need to emulate, if they need to fight corruption and provide the best leadership to those below them.

Nelson Mandela aka Madiba was a leader by birth and a leader to the end as until today many people see him as a leader although retired. In his first year in Fort Hare University, he started involving himself in the council representing students, called SRC, which was opposing harsh and unfair policies in the University. After retiring in 1999, he went ahead and formed organizations to help other people mostly those with HIV in South Africa.

Mandela was a leader with a vision that he ensured it was fulfilled no matter the hindrances. During his trial, he said that he had fought the dominion of white and that of black people and he was ready to die to ensure that all people had the same rights, irrespective of their race. During his 27 years in jail, he continued to influence and fight apartheid through his wife Winnie Mandela. He even studied a bachelor in law from London External Program University while still in the prison with no hope of when he was to be released.

In all times, Mandela was a leader who sacrificed himself for the benefit of other. He sacrificed his youth and life to fight against racialism. At age of 20, he was still involved in fighting apartheid. He even went to jail for 27 years

just because of his stand of equal rights to white, black and colored people. After being in jail for 27 years for his country, he became the president for only four years and then retired in order to give chance for another leader to lead South Africa (Klerk, 2). Moreover, he even sacrificed his good peaceful retirement just to cater for those people with HIV and AIDs and those poor. These are great sacrifices that not all leaders mostly today's leaders can be able to do just for the sake of those under them.

An influential characteristic was one of his traits. To support this, when he was in first year, he was ordered to leave the University due to his involvement in boycotts and his great influence which the university saw as a threat. They even black mailed him by asking him to be elected in SRC if he wanted to remain a student in the university. Another indication that he is an influential person is that still when in prison, he was able to gain supporters both inside and outside the prison with the help of his wife Winnie. When he came out of prison, all people with one voice wanted him to become the president even the former president, as he was able to convince all that he was indeed the leader they were looking for.

Mandela leadership skills were unique, as for him, he led from behind. This is a skill he learned from a tribal king called Jongintaba who raised him. The king, when in a tribal meeting, he would let all the other leaders speak and then he would speak putting in place what the other leaders had said. In modern leadership, people want a leader that will listen to their needs and pleads and hence act accordingly to what all or most of those under them want. When as a president, many activist tried to opposed his leadership mostly concerning the matter of how he approached the HIV pandemic in <https://assignbuster.com/a-review-on-nelson-mandela-history-essay/>

South Africa, Mandela never tried to prove them wrong by then, he waited till he retired and that when he started organizations to help people living with HIV/AIDS. He let people criticize his actions but he had plans on the best way to curb those problems (Stengel, 9).

Mandela was a leader that never broke his promises and fought for what was just ethically but not by law. In support of this, from his youth, he fought for equality to all and opposed dominion by any race even his own. He stood by this mission and even when he became the president, he greatly influenced black people not to hate white people for all they had done to them. To emphasize on this, during Rugby World Cup in 1994, he led black people to support South African team that they greatly hated because it was dominated by whites. He even handed over the trophy, after springboks won the finals, to the captain of the team who was called Pioneer while wearing his jersey although the player was white. This was a great move in reconciliation of black and white South Africans.

Simplicity is a trait that is essential to all good leaders and this is a trait that Nelson Mandela had. During his life in prison, Mandela was able to form daily habits like athletes and good eating regimes, habits that he have maintained over the years. The results of this have led to him being alive up to date with over 93 years of age. Still in support of this, Mandela is one of the few leaders that maintained their stature, visions and integrity even after becoming president while other many freedom fighters, ended up being dictators and manipulating power for their own sake. This have made him to be hailed as one of the greatest moral leader even leading to him being honored with over 200 awards in just four decades, including the most

treasured Nobel Peace Prize in 1993. He has also being honored with over 50 international degrees from different countries. All this credit has being because he maintained his humbleness and visions to the end (Jong, 4).

Nelson Mandela, even when others saw no hope ahead, he never gave up. This is a trait that a good leader should have as all other followers see them as role models. Even when in a political prison, with harsh conditions like hard labor, very few visits, inadequate food and segregation in accordance with races, Nelson never gave up, even after all those years in prison. His spirit was still alive during his life in prison, this led to him studying law in prison and influencing those young activist that were black and imprisoned in Robben Island on how to curb the apartheid. His dream to become the person to bring equality to all no matter the challenges was finally achieved when he was elected as the first democratic president of South Africa even when being at age of 75 (Mandela, 129).

He was a passionate leader and a risk taker. After coming back to prison and being separated from the others who had being his friend for the last 20 years, Mandela opposed their move to riot due to his separation. He told them there may be some good that was to come out of that. This separation helped him to have negotiation in 1985 with the government in power operating apartheid. To many other activists that saw him as a leader, they started opposing his move. They even termed his actions as a move to sell them out. To help gain other imprisoned activist support, he launched a campaign persuading other ANC activist that what he was doing was the right thing to do. Deliberately and slowly, he brought all this people along

with his idea. This led to all things changing and for apartheid to be abolished ( Brick, 4)

Moreover, he organized and raised money to support his campaigns from outside countries, a move that led to his imprisonment. That was an act requiring courage and that was risky, knowing that it could lead to him being imprisoned for lifetime, but he went along and did it. While other activist looked on the best way to end apartheid in short run, Mandela was always focusing on the best way to end apartheid with minimal bloodshed even if it was to be achieved in long run.

To him leadership and victory was not a matter of principle but a matter of tactics. With the knowledge of when precisely and how to change between the many roles he had in hand as a diplomat, politician, Marty and a warrior, he created a non-racial south African country after overthrowing apartheid. While many reached a time and saw bloodshed as done by other independent countries in Africa as the only option to end apartheid and colonialism, to him he saw it as the time to engage in peaceful negotiation with the government to ensure justice to all and loss to none.

To another trait to support the argument, Nelson was a transformation leader. While many leader go into negotiation with a move to trade one thing with another even with their followers, Nelson was a visionary leader who seek appealing to his followers to change their intentions and plans and move with him to a better universal purpose and need. In short he was an agent of change.

Another trait that makes Nelson Mandela a great leader is that he was a learner not a teacher. By this I mean that, he accepted that he did not know all and allowed to learn from others that had skills. When young he learned from the tribal leader on the best way to rule. When in prison he studied law to increase his knowledge on law and ways to govern. Moreover, he listened to other activist views in order to learn on what all wanted to achieve in the end. The teaching he gave to the activist was to help them see his vision in a different perspective where they could achieve what they wanted without even shedding blood and causing mayhem and havoc. Even when he went to negotiations with the government, he was able to convince the others and let them see things as he was seeing them.

Nelson Mandela also had a charismatic personality in that when others were afraid of the future or looked on the negative side of things, he encouraged them to look on the positive side of things. When he was to be separated from his long friends and activists in prison, as his friends planned to riot, he opposed their move and encouraged them that there was some good that could arise from that and they trusted him. Moreover, when he was taken to jail for sabotage, people started losing hope to the end of apartheid but his assurance and advice kept their spirit on.

All his life, Mandela has show courage ever since he was a young boy. During his circumcision, he expressed his courage and was even offered a name Dalibunga meaning Bungha founder, a body that ruled Transkei traditionally. Even when found guilty of sabotage, he never feared to go in prison and he said that he was even ready to die for justice and equality of all. Moreover he never feared engaging in talks with the government, a move that could lead

to him being killed or rejected by his own people if it failed. To him, he never feared to fail. It was better to try and fail than not to try at all.

Even before going to prison, when ANC was banned after the government saw the success it had, Mandela and other activist came up with a risky decision by continuing with ANC underground as nonviolence movements could not work anymore. This risky act made Mandela go to prison but in a great way, it inspired many others to help in preparing the country for a change.

A unique character that Mandela had was that, he was and still is generous. This is a trait that makes leaders better as they end up putting those under them in limelight as they go on with their duties. For Mandela, after retiring in 1999 from politics, he became involved in various human and social rights organizations. Since then he has facilitated building of many schools and even helped those living with HIV. Another indication of his generosity is when he retired from president office only after four years even after being in jail for over two decades. After completing his mission to unite all South African people to become one no matter their races and abolishing apartheid, his mission was over and hence he retired for another leader to take over which was Thabo Mbeki. For his entire life, generosity was the reason why people loved him so much and adored him.

In a great way his success to lead others can be contributed to his tactfully use of consensus. With consensus, better and more supported decisions are made hence building motivation and commitment in the members of that group toward achieving the set objectives. Over his life as a leader, he has



involved other subordinates to come up with the best policies and actions for all.

In conclusion, although each and every person has his weakness and failures in life, Nelson Mandela is a human too and hence eligible to the same weaknesses. With him failing to help some people when they needed him and making remarks not pleasing to all, he still stands as one of the greatest leaders of our time with the reason being that, over his life he have sacrificed a lot and done a lot than very many leaders have done. He has ended up fulfilling his missions and plans and even correcting the little mistakes he may have made. Even after very many years, Nelson Mandela will be seen as to be a great leader.

#### Work cited

Brick A. Nelson Mandela. 7 June 1998. 17 March 2011 .

Jong. “ Nelson Mandela Introduction and Contribution.” A Great leader (2009): 4.

Klerk, De. biography of Nelson Mandela. 13 August 1993. 17 March 2011 .

Mandela, Nelson. Long Walk to Freedom. Johnersberg: Little brown and company, 1995. 129.

Stengel, Richard. “ Mandela’s 8 Lessons of leadership.” Mandela (2008): 9.