

# Abraham lincoln – critical analysis



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Why choose Abraham Lincoln? There are so many great leaders from our collective past and present, so choosing one to focus on as a Leader was not an easy task. We decided to let fate decide and took out a penny. Just before flipping the coin, Janshan noticed that it was an American Penny and wasn't sure what the emblems on the coin were. It was Abraham Lincoln's face and the Lincoln Washington memorial building .

Inscribed on the penny is " In God we Trust. " What we knew of him at that moment was that he was considered a great American president who was assassinated while watching a theatre production with his wife. We also knew that he was the President that freed the negro slaves through the Emancipation Proclamation and because of this action, had to face a civil war that divided the United States The North vs The South. Today, the United States Commander and Chief is from African American heritage and it is because of Abraham Lincoln's leadership that today this is a reality.

We were excited to discover more of this great mans life - his character, his trials and tribulations and how he managed to free over 3 million African American slaves and unite a country in turmoil at the same time! When reading about his early life, to someone who knew nothing of Abraham Lincoln before his Presidency would have perceived him to be nothing of distinction. He was born from two poor farmers who had little or no formal education. He had only a year of schooling throughout his adolescence and taught himself how to read and write. His step mom Sarah Lincoln wrote that , 2 Abe read all the books he could lay his hands on.... he never told me a lie in his life, never evaded, never quarreled, never dodged nor turned a corner to avoid any chastisement or other responsibility. " (1) He decided to apply

to a school of business and soon after dropped out. A year after failing business school, his childhood sweetheart dies and Lincoln suffers a nervous breakdown. Experiencing all of these tribulations, Abraham Lincoln's strength in character doesn't allow him to give up. He decides to practice law. In spite of no formal training, Lincoln decided to try for the State Legislation and loses.

Later on in his career he decides to run for Congress, and the Senate twice, and loses. In his fifties he was elected the 16th President of the United States. Why is Lincoln considered a leader? People respected his honesty, integrity and respect for everyone. His strong devotion to individual rights and to The Constitution exemplifies his feelings of duty and loyalty. He preserved the Union and defended the Constitution against the South and even those within the North. Lincoln was a man of his word. He expressed empathy for the poor and common man, as well as show sorrow toward those you were lost in the fight.

He demonstrated this by freeing 60, 000 confederation soldiers when the war was over. He had the most difficult of tasks by any President to date – To reunite a country being torn apart by Civil war. By staying true to his Baptist roots, he abolishes slavery and the lives of 3, 000, 000 African American Souls are declared free! 3 Abraham Lincoln as a Leader From 1861 – 1865, at the age of 52 years Abraham Lincoln became the 16th President of a broken country. The South had formed a new alliance as The Confederacy in opposition to Lincoln's anti-slavery act – The Emancipation Proclamation.

President Abraham Lincoln led the Union and preserved the ideals founded within the Constitution. Many Southern states made it clear that if Lincoln was elected, they would leave the Union. The South was against Lincoln because he opposed slavery. South Carolina was the first to secede in December 1860. Ten other Southern states followed. These states became known as the Confederacy. The secession of the Southern states led to the first shots of the Civil War when the Confederates seized Fort Sumner in South Carolina in April 1861. Lincoln faced the greatest national crisis of any U. S. President.

He hated war and the death and destruction it would bring. However, he accepted war as the only means of saving the Union. He warned the South in his Inaugural Address: “ In your hands, my dissatisfied fellow countrymen, and not in mine, is the momentous issue of civil war. The government will not assail you... You have no oath registered in Heaven to destroy the government, while I shall have the most solemn one to preserve, protect and defend it” (1) Although the Emancipation Proclamation did not immediately free a single slave, it changed the way black men were accepted during the war.

Black men could join the Union Army and Navy. The liberated could become the liberators. By the end of the war, nearly 200, 000 black soldiers and sailors fought for the Union and freedom. 4 Lincoln being a gifted story-teller, believed that you could convince more people to share his vision by being kind and empathetic towards all people. He was always clear in his message so that all men, regardless of their education was able to hear the feeling of the address the common message. This is most evident in his Second

Inaugural Address when he goes about reaffirming the goal of saving the Union: " It is worthy of your every effort.

Nowhere in the world is presented a government of so much liberty and equality. To the humblest and poorest amongst us are held out the highest privileges and positions. The present moment finds me at the White House, yet there is as good a chance for your children as there was for my father's. Again, I admonish you not to be turned from your stern purpose of defending your beloved country and its free institutions by any arguments urged by ambitious and designing men, but stand fast to the Union and the old way.

Soldiers, I bid you God-speed to your homes. " (1) Abraham Lincoln -

Contingency & Behavior Theory Abraham Lincoln fits into era 2: Rational management under behavior theories and contingency theories.

Contingency Theory No any other president had ever faced a situation like Lincoln did - a total civil war! To ensure the success of the federal forces and the effort to reunite the country, he was decisive and utilized more authority than any president before him. For example Lincoln declared the military to make arrests without specific charges.

During Lincoln administration, he ordered to spend 5 money on buying navy ships and funding to encourage immigration. In 1862 Lincoln issued formal presidential war orders and the emancipation proclamation. This document ordered that all slaves living in any state not in the union by 1 January 1863 henceforward and forever free. Lincoln felt he could justify this act aimed at the states because this freed slaves were needed in the armed forces. It also

prevented the war from a conflict between France and Great Britain into a war to end slavery.

In 1 February 1865 Lincoln approved and signed the final resolution submitting the thirteenth improvement which eliminated slavery. Behavior Theory Looking at Lincoln's political and military career, he was stable in his values and behaviors. Lincoln assumed that bulging union and authorizing his army leaders was the most active approach. He worked hard for his positive relationship with his dependents. As of his time commander in chief, Lincoln appointed and replaced many army commanders. As a final point, in 1864 Lincoln appointed Ulysses S.

Grant, who appeared to understand how to use the powers Lincoln gave him. Abraham Lincoln's Character and Behavior Abraham Lincoln had certain character traits that we believe made him a natural born leader. A lawyer, businessman and politician, Lincoln was referred to as "Honest Abe" – a name he had been given when he payed off all of his debt from failed businesses. 6 As President, Lincoln had to dismiss and appoint many of his generals and army commanders, but all the while never spoke badly of them and even defended them from public attack.

By doing this, Lincoln demonstrated his integrity as a leader. Instead of staying in the safety of the White House, he frequently visited the troops and remained close to them. He would inspect the federal units that moved into Washington, and often visited the soldiers in their units often riding alongside on horseback telling stories and listening to them. This shows his loyalty, empathy, humble nature and identification with the common man –

possibly because of him growing up poor. Lincoln also had an open door policy, where people were able to speak with him directly.

His bravery in defending the Union and his devotion to upholding the Constitution and Individual rights by abolishing slavery is proof that Abraham Lincoln was truly a great leader. He used these traits to further his political career and people of the time considered him a natural leader. A leader's actions, not only his personality traits are what history tells us about that person. " Leaders tend to exhibit two key behaviors: orientation toward people or orientation toward task. " (3) Lincoln demonstrated a melding of these two behaviors in his Presidency.

Lincoln was the type of leader that remained true to his values and beliefs. He exemplified this in his behavior toward his constituents within the White House; to the country's military forces; and most importantly toward ALL peoples within the United States. 7 Lincoln worked tirelessly to overcome negative feelings toward those who would initially oppose him. William H. Seward who ran against Lincoln for the Republican nomination and who often demeaned Lincoln by saying publicly that he was incompetent and unqualified for the Presidency is one such example.

Lincoln, however, recognized Seward's positive qualities and appointed him into the Cabinet. Abraham would often visit Seward at his home and office in order that he would build trust in Seward, as well as, allow him to visit the troops in order that he may get a first hand look at what was happening out in the front. Seward who had his own agenda would often try to influence the President on many issues. It is Lincoln's skill in building a positive

relationship with Seward that eventually lead to Seward trusting in Lincoln and providing him with honest counsel.

In the summer of 1864, the war was not going well for the North and many members of the Republican party would put pressure on him to compromise on the slavery issue, however, Lincoln held firm on the issue of slavery and turned away from this advice. Lincoln being a good listener always listened, however, he still remained firm in making his own decisions. He was also willing to share credit for successes and also the blame when there were failures. When the house approved of an action that Lincoln had made, Lincoln would often state that, “ the path success and ambition is broad enough for two.

(1) When mistakes were made within his Cabinet, and questions were raised about certain members within it, Lincoln spoke up and accepted responsibility for their actions and personally took the blame. The management and leading of the military also affirms the notion of Lincoln remaining true to his core beliefs. He believed that building strong relationships and encouraging his 8 military commanders to carry out actions they thought were best in order to unify the country was the best form of action. This was apparent in a letter written by one of Lincoln’s Generals, Ulysses S. Grant where Grant goes onto say; “ In my ? st interview with Mr. Lincoln alone he stated to me that he never professed to be a military man or to know how campaigns should be conducted, and never wanted to interfere in them: but that procrastination on the part of the commanders, and the pressure from the people at the North and Congress, which was also with him, forced him into issuing his series of Military Order...

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All he wanted or had ever wanted was some one who would take the responsibility and act, and call on him for all the assistance needed, pledging to himself to use all the power of the government in rendering such assistance. (7) Abraham Lincoln's Leadership style Abraham Lincoln used a delegative leadership style. He appointed people that were better educated and well known than him and he also introduced the Freedom Declaration. Lincoln also visited the battlefield often in support of the troops. Lincoln gave much authority to Secretary of State William H. Seward who ran against Lincoln for the Republican presidential nomination, in presidential business. Seward in turn, gave Lincoln honest counsel, including how to conduct the war. Communication was clearly one of Lincoln's strengths.

As a historian of Lincoln once wrote, 9 " His years as a lawyer helped him improve his skills in the art of persuasion. He knew what needed to be done and used his personal, moral, and legal authority to make quick, effective decisions. Lincoln reminded his subordinates of their purpose by reminding them of their origins and creating a vision of the future to ensure their rights were forever preserved. Lincoln was able to communicate his vision at every step—in his conversations, personal letters, speeches, and actions. Lincoln was involved in most details of the war.

He assigned special people to report all the details to him. He often went directly to the sources and waited for their reports so he could quickly make the next decision. He built a plan to bring the secessionist states back into the Union without retaliation, helping those communities to heal more quickly from the war. " (2) Finally directing toward all of his people, on November 19, 1863, President Lincoln gave his famous Gettysburg Address

in Gettysburg, Pennsylvania. The speech dedicated the battlefield to the soldiers who had died there. The battle site became a military cemetery.

Lincoln stated in his moving speech: "... we here highly resolve that these dead shall not have died in vain — that this nation, under God, shall have a new birth of freedom — and that government of the people, by the people, for the people, shall not perish from the earth. " (1) In Conclusion, from humble beginnings to an Presidency filled with Integrity and Honor, President Abraham Lincoln will forever be remembered for his bold and brave decisions to preserve the United States of America and allow ALL of his people to have the same rights and freedoms - regardless of their origins.

The lives that were lost in the battle will be forgotten in time, but what they fought for - equality and freedom to ALL - may that remain forever.

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