

Is the job of President too big for one person?

The Constitution assigns two leadership roles to the President: chief executive and commander-in-chief. Historically, however, Presidents have acted as "chief" in many other ways: as chief diplomat, chief of state, chief of a political party, chief legislator, and chief guardian of the economy. Sometimes Presidents perform each role separately. At other times, they "wear many hats," combining several job functions at once. Study the feature below, identifying each presidential role.

THE PRESIDENT'S ROLES

CHIEF EXECUTIVE: Manages the agencies and departments of the Executive Branch. Appoints high-level officials. Reads department reports.

COMMANDER-IN-CHIEF: Makes defense policy. Directs and commands the armed forces of the nation.

CHIEF DIPLOMAT: Makes U.S. foreign policy. Appoints diplomats. Negotiates treaties.

CHIEF OF STATE: Acts as ceremonial head of the nation. Personally symbolizes the values and ideals of the American people.

CHIEF OF PARTY: Campaigns for members of the President's own political party. Appoints members of the party to government jobs.

CHIEF LEGISLATOR: Makes recommendations to Congress. Signs and vetoes bills.

Following is an hour-by-hour schedule showing how a modern President may spend a "typical day." Each activity on the schedule requires the President to play one or more roles. On the blank space under each event, tell what specific role is involved.

SCHEDULE FOR A TYPICAL PRESIDENTIAL DAY

APPOINTMENTS

June 7th

A.M.

6:30 Awakened by a staff member, the President listens to a brief report on events that occurred during the night.

ROLE: _____

7:00 Meets with Chief of Staff to review the day's schedule.

ROLE: _____

7:30 Meets with Congressional leaders for breakfast and discusses a major tax bill.

ROLE: _____

8:00 Meets with National Security Adviser, who explains the latest intelligence reports on troop strength in the Soviet Union.

ROLE: _____

8:20 Meets with Press Secretary in the Oval Office. Reviews the questions that will probably be asked at an evening press conference.

ROLE: _____

9:00 Meets with staff member to review important bills to be considered in the House and Senate.

ROLE: _____

9:40 Confers with an adviser about procedures to improve the handling of the 70,000 letters received each week at the White House.

ROLE: _____

10:00 Addresses a group of award-winning high school students in the Rose Garden.

ROLE: _____

10:40 Meets with the Secretaries of State and Defense to discuss strategy for upcoming conference with European heads of state.

ROLE: _____

11:15 Addresses a group of civil rights leaders about efforts to pass a fair employment act.

ROLE: _____

11:30 Meets with political leaders to discuss plans for an upcoming campaign tour.

ROLE: _____

P.M.

12:00 Writes a message stating various reasons for vetoing a bill.

ROLE: _____

1:00 Meets with the Vice President over lunch and discusses plans for attending the funeral of a foreign leader.

ROLE: _____

2:15 Meets with the Attorney General to consider several possible appointments to the post of FBI director.

ROLE: _____

3:00 Meets with the governor of a Western state where flooding has caused severe damage. Discusses federal relief measures.

ROLE: _____

3:50 Signs several bills and responds to letters from party leaders.

ROLE: _____

4:00 Meets with several labor leaders to discuss new bills on working conditions.

ROLE: _____

- 4:30 Meets with a group of Japanese business leaders to discuss U.S.-Japanese trade relations.
ROLE: _____
- 5:15 Meets with Joint Chiefs of Staff to review military situation in the Middle East.
ROLE: _____
- 6:00 Dines with a group of people who may contribute large sums to the President's political party.
ROLE: _____
- 7:30 At a televised press conference, responds to 25 questions about national and international issues.
ROLE: _____
- 8:30 After returning to the Oval Office, reads a stack of reports, memos, and letters.
ROLE: _____
- 11:55 Climbs wearily into bed.

THINKING IT OVER

Think about the number of roles that the President is expected to carry out on a "typical" day.

1. Which job of the President do you believe to be the most important? _____
Why? _____

2. Which job of the President do you believe to be the least important? _____
Why? _____

3. Is the job of President too big for one person?

<p>a. Yes, I would make the following changes in the President's duties: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>	<p>b. No, I would leave the office of President alone because: _____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p> <p>_____</p>
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