

# Teddy's Tips on Leadership

***"I have never won anything without hard labor and the exercise of good judgment and careful planning and working long in advance."***

**Theodore Roosevelt**

**T**heodore Roosevelt was always prepared. This is one attribute that keeps him ranked among the top five Presidents in history.

One example of his penchant for preparation is best told in his own words. Here is a passage from his autobiography, penned in 1913.

"While the Agricultural Appropriation Bill was passing through the Senate, in 1907, Senator Fulton, of Oregon, secured an amendment providing that the President could not set aside any additional National Forests in the six Northwestern States. This meant retaining some sixteen million of acres to be exploited by land grabbers and by the representatives of the great special interests, at the expense of the public interest.

But for four years the Forest Service had been gathering field notes as to what forests ought to be set aside in these States, and so was prepared to act. It was equally undesirable to veto the whole agricultural bill, and to sign it with this amendment effective. Accordingly, a plan to create the necessary National Forests in these States before the Agricultural Bill could be passed and signed was laid before me by Mr. Pinchot (*Pinchot was Chief Forester and a close friend of TR*). I approved it.

The necessary papers were immediately prepared. I signed the last proclamation a couple of days before. By my signature, the bill became law; and when the friends of the

special interests in the Senate got their amendment through and woke up, they discovered that sixteen million acres of timberland had been saved for the people by putting them in the National Forests before the land grabbers could get at them.

The opponents of the Forest Service turned handsprings in their wrath; and dire were their threats against the Executive; but the threats could not be carried out, and were really only a tribute to the efficiency of our action."

Roosevelt had but five days in which to act. His action would have been impossible had he not had the foresight to order the Forest Service to collect information and draw maps of these magnificent forests. In those five days, he had his clerks working around the clock drafting the paperwork necessary for him to proclaim twenty-one new forest reserves and enlarging eleven others. Among these 16 million acres are Olympic National Forest and Mt. Ranier in Washington, and several reserves in Oregon, Wyoming, Colorado, Idaho, and Montana.

Planning is the zero stage of any initiative or project. W. Edwards Deming (1900 – 1993) often said, "85% of the impact is in the first 15% of the process." TR knew it intuitively. That's what made him a great leader.

*David Markovitz Brings Teddy Roosevelt Back to Life for You. David conducts keynote presentations as Teddy and conducts breakout workshops as David. Learn more about his programs at [www.TeddyLeads.com](http://www.TeddyLeads.com).*

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