

Trump Talk

An Interview with Donald J. Trump,
Chairman, President, and Chief Executive Officer, The Trump Organization

EDITORS' NOTE Donald Trump is the author of 15 best-selling books, including *The Art of the Deal*, *The Art of the Comeback*, *How to Get Rich*, *Think Like a Billionaire*, *Never Give Up*, *Why We Want You To Be Rich*, *Think Like a Champion*, *Midas Touch*, and *Time To Get Tough*. He serves on the board of the Police Athletic League and is Chairman of the Donald J. Trump Foundation. Trump is also the co-producer and star of *The Apprentice* and *Celebrity Apprentice*, and in January 2007, he received a star on the Hollywood



Donald J. Trump

Walk of Fame. He is a graduate of the Wharton School of the University of Pennsylvania, and recently received the Statesman of the Year award from the Sarasota GOP.

COMPANY BRIEF The Trump Organization (www.trump.com) is a premier international real estate company with holdings that include the Trump International Hotel & Tower, the Trump World Tower at the United Nations Plaza, and Trump Park Avenue. Headquartered in Trump Tower in New York, The Trump Organization also owns the Mar-a-Lago Club in Palm Beach, Florida, and 13 nationally and internationally acclaimed golf courses. The most recent acquisition is the iconic Doral in Miami, encompassing 800 acres, and the highly esteemed Trump International Golf Links Scotland opened in Aberdeen in July of this year. The Trump Organization was chosen as the developer for the Old Post Office Building in Washington, D.C. in early 2012.

As one of the most recognizable brands worldwide, what does the Trump brand stand for and what makes it so special?

Trump represents the gold standard worldwide; it's an automatic connection to the highest level of product on every level. Our hotels are noted for superb service as well as cutting-edge amenities and beautiful design. The public doesn't have to second guess what they're getting for their money. What makes our brand so special is our unwavering commitment to being the best – we set our own standard and we meet it by being superior to any competitor on every level. If it's not the best, it's not Trump.

You have been an outspoken leader in regard to the global economic challenges facing the U.S. What needs to be done to ensure that the U.S. maintains its leadership position around the world?

Having a strong leader would help. Obama has not been an effective leader, he's not a good negotiator, and that's crucial for someone in his position. He's not wise to how business works either here or internationally. A strong leader is what we need. The people of America have always been hard workers

and now there are no jobs, and Obama has not been encouraging or supportive to people who have provided jobs through their own hard work and competence.

What needs to be done in Washington to address the key issues facing the country?

The first step would be to elect a President who has leadership skills. That encompasses a broad spectrum and considering the economic situation, we need someone who has a strong business background. There is no way out of this mess without the help of a leader with business acumen. There are too many self-serving politicians in Washington – this country needs people who can rise above themselves and focus on the whole. Otherwise, we run the risk of continuing to run in circles.

What are the key qualities and attributes that make a successful leader?

Great leaders take responsibility and they need to instill confidence. People need to know they can trust their leader just as soldiers need to trust their General. Leaders also need to know they are setting an example. They need to get themselves out of the way in order to make pragmatic decisions – what's best for everyone is the best choice. That's one reason for the division that exists in Washington – everyone has his own platform and that takes precedence in the decisions being made. There should only be one agenda: making this country strong and productive once again. We have the capacity to be great, but the right ingredients are not there to make it happen.

What makes New York City so resilient, especially in terms of the real estate market?

The people are resilient; 9/11 is a great example of that. We kept moving forward and remained focused after it happened. There is also a tremendous energy here and people are accustomed to working quickly and getting things done. The tempo is right here for resiliency – there's no time to stay down.

In terms of the real estate market, there have always been ups and downs. New York has always bounced back, because New Yorkers are tenacious and a lot of people want to live here. In my experience, no matter how the market is faring, there are always opportunities. When I first started out in Manhattan, the market was very bad; everyone said it was a terrible time. But that was my focus so I stuck with it and I'm glad I did.

You have achieved strong growth in your hotel business, adding a number of properties to the Trump Hotel Collection. Do you foresee additional expansion in the hotel business and are you focused on specific markets?

Each of the eight existing hotels managed by Trump Hotel Collection has received numerous awards and accolades. Given the great success of each of the properties, we are actively growing the portfolio in key cities and resort destinations globally. In addition to being selected by the U.S. General Services Administration as the preferred selected developer of the Old Post Office in Washington, D.C. – which will open as Trump International Hotel Washington, D.C. – we are currently focused on management opportunities in Asia-Pacific and Latin America.

Did you know early on that *The Apprentice* would have attracted such a loyal following?

Considering that the first season of *The Apprentice* was branded as a "one season wonder," it's amazing we've already had 12 successful seasons. We had such a strong start that I thought it might not continue that way, but it has. When Mark Burnett approached me about doing the show, what appealed to me is that the premise had more depth to it than most reality shows; there is an educational subtext to *The Apprentice* that has given it longevity. Schools plan their business classes around it and send in their essays about what they've learned. It's been very gratifying. ●