

The shooting at Parkland High School was the crisis I examined, and the speech I chose is President Trump's address to the nation after the tragedy. Trump's address to the nation after the tragedy sought to console and give strength to the citizens of our nation. As the leader of the United States, the people look to the President for guidance and direction when adversity strikes our country. President Trump connected on an emotional level with his audience to instill confidence and ease the pain and fears of a nation in mourning. Trump's displayed behaviors and traits that are prevalent in successful leaders, and his speech exhibited emotional intelligence that is key to being an effective leader.

Examining the content and delivery of his speech, Trump shows the traits of a good leader. The will to act; and confident leadership is one of the traits that make an effective leader. The President was "internally controlled" he gave the impression of control, and his words transmitted a will to act and engage in a solution to gun violence. President Trump's speech and body language also displayed the trait of the will to use power and follower-centered leadership. Trump's speech gave the feeling that he would use his power for the greater good of the country, not just his interests. He mentioned the actions he will take to curb gun violence in our schools regardless of the political backlash he would garner. Trump's somber and emotional speech showcased two traits that are common in above-average leaders.

The behaviors transmitted through Trump's speech showcased his leadership skills. The President displayed communication leadership and caring leadership, as explained on page 11 of *Contemporary Issues In Leadership*. Donald Trump's ability to focus on others and present vital ideas throughout his speech demonstrate his vision and solution for gun violence in our schools. He discusses steps for a solution and conveys an urgency to act on the problem. Caring leadership behavior is also exhibited in the President's speech. He shows compassion and concern not only for the victims and their families but for the state of the nation. Trump shows respect and concern throughout his speech. He conveys his hurt and anger and his willingness to address the plague of gun violence. He connects with the people with his heartfelt condolences and his promises of action and solution. Trump's ability to effectively utilize communication and caring leadership behaviors helped unite a nation during a time of grief and anger.

I believe that the emotional intelligence Trump displayed with his speech connected with the people. "One distinctive aspect of leading adaptive change is that you must connect with the values, beliefs, and anxieties of the people you are trying to move" (Heifetz, Grashow, & Linsky, 2009, p. 38). Trump accomplished this by having empathy for the individuals, the families, communities, and the entire nation. He acknowledged the sorrow and anguish of the country and reassured everyone that the problem would be addressed. President Trump was self-aware and recognized the emotion and mood of the country. He also showed a high level of motivation to work for a solution to mass shootings. Trump told the people that he would take action to resolve the gun violence and that it was a priority. The emotional intelligence component that Trump utilized the most was empathy. He addresses the fears, sorrow, and anger of the country and connects with them through understanding their emotions. The President spoke of unity and strength and gave the people hope that a solution was possible. Trump also displayed calmness and resolve by his body language and tone of voice. Trump's Parkland speech demonstrated the leadership and emotional intelligence that leaders need to be successful.

In conclusion, Trump displayed the traits and behaviors of a good leader throughout his speech. His words and body language connected with the people. The President eased the grief, anxiety, and anger of the nation by using his emotional intelligence to connect with his listeners. Trump carried himself and spoke like a great leader while addressing the Parkland mass shooting, but his talk of a gun violence solution was empty. President Trump's speech, if taken as a snapshot of his Presidency, showed that he could be an effective leader. Unfortunately, overall, Trump has displayed many more traits and behaviors that contradict the textbook as to what constitutes a great leader.

## Transcript

My fellow Americans, today I speak to a nation in grief. Yesterday, a school filled with innocent children and caring teachers became the scene of terrible violence, hatred and evil.

Around 2:30 yesterday afternoon, police responded to reports of gunfire at Marjory Stoneman Douglas High School in Parkland, Florida -- a great and safe community. There, a shooter, who is now in custody, opened fire on defenseless students and teachers. He murdered 17 people and badly wounded at least 14 others.

Our entire nation, with one heavy heart, is praying for the victims and their families. To every parent, teacher, and child who is hurting so badly, we are here for you -- whatever you need, whatever we can do, to ease your pain. We are all joined together as one American family, and your suffering is our burden also.

No child, no teacher, should ever be in danger in an American school. No parent should ever have to fear for their sons and daughters when they kiss them goodbye in the morning.

Each person who was stolen from us yesterday had a full life ahead of them -- a life filled with wondrous beauty and unlimited potential and promise. Each one had dreams to pursue, love to give, and talents to share with the world. And each one had a family to whom they meant everything in the world.

Today, we mourn for all of those who lost their lives. We comfort the grieving and the wounded. And we hurt for the entire community of Parkland, Florida, that is now in shock, in pain, and searching for answers.

To law enforcement, first responders, and teachers who responded so bravely in the face of danger: We thank you for your courage. Soon after the shooting, I spoke with Gov. (Rick) Scott to convey our deepest sympathies to the people of Florida and our determination to assist in any way that we can. I also spoke with Florida Attorney General Pam Bondi and Broward County Sheriff Scott Israel.

I'm making plans to visit Parkland to meet with families and local officials, and to continue coordinating the federal response.

In these moments of heartache and darkness, we hold on to God's word in scripture: "I have heard your prayer and seen your tears. I will heal you."

We trust in that promise, and we hold fast to our fellow Americans in their time of sorrow.

I want to speak now directly to America's children, especially those who feel lost, alone, confused or even scared: I want you to know that you are never alone and you never will be. You have people who care about you, who love you, and who will do anything at all to protect you. If you need help, turn to a teacher, a family member, a local police officer, or a faith leader. Answer hate with love; answer cruelty with kindness.

We must also work together to create a culture in our country that embraces the dignity of life, that creates deep and meaningful human connections and that turns classmates and colleagues into friends and neighbors.

Our administration is working closely with local authorities to investigate the shooting and learn everything we can. We are committed to working with state and local leaders to help secure our schools, and tackle the difficult issue of mental health.

Later this month, I will be meeting with the nation's governors and attorney generals, where making our schools and our children safer will be our top priority. It is not enough to simply take actions that make us feel like we are making a difference. We must actually make that difference.

In times of tragedy, the bonds that sustain us are those of family, faith, community, and country. These bonds are stronger than the forces of hatred and evil, and these bonds grow even stronger in the hours of our greatest need.

And so always, but especially today, let us hold our loved ones close, let us pray for healing and for peace, and let us come together as one nation to wipe away the tears and strive for a much better tomorrow.

Thank you. And God Bless you all. Thank you very much.

#### Works Cited

*CNN Politics*. (2018, February 15). Retrieved from Read Trump's Speech Addressing the Parkland School Shooting: <https://www.cnn.com/2018/02/15/politics/transcript-trump-parkland-shooting/index.html>

Heifetz, R., Grashow, A., & Linsky, M. (2009). *The Practice of Adaptive Leadership*. Boston, MA: Harvard Business Press.