

Opinions

Trump's sacrifices are hard. You think it's easy working 11 to 5?

By [Dana Milbank](#)

Being president isn't easy under the best of circumstances. Imagine how hard it must be if you're Donald Trump.

"I probably work more hours than almost any past president," [Trump announced](#) Sunday, [adding](#) that he "had no choice but to work very long hours!"

On Monday, after retweeting his [own assertion](#) from a few days earlier that he is "working hard," he eliminated any doubt: "No president ever worked harder than me," [he declared](#).

Franklin D. Roosevelt died of a cerebral hemorrhage while recovering from exhaustion after leading the country through the Depression and World War II. Woodrow Wilson suffered a stroke after laboring in Europe to negotiate the Treaty of Versailles and then selling it to the country. But they were loafers next to Trump.

The president appears to be stung by a [leak](#) of three months of schedules showing he spent about 60 percent of his workday in "Executive Time" — watching TV, tweeting, gabbing and the like. When [last week's schedule](#) was leaked to Axios, it showed Trump had cut back Executive Time — to 50 percent!

This sacrifice was hard. You think it's easy working 11 to 5?

Trump's assertion that he is the hardest-working president is consistent with other superlatives he has shared. He has kept [more promises](#), [cut more regulations](#) and built a [better economy](#) than any other president and been [more popular](#) than any Republican president. Just about no president did more in his first six months, and no president did more in his first nine months, or the first two years. Yet no president since Abraham Lincoln has been treated worse by the media!

Some might think Trump's hard-work assertion reflects a doth-protest-too-much compensation for perceived laziness. He has likewise boasted that "nobody has been tougher on Russia," [that nobody](#) "has been more with the military than I have as a president," that "nobody wants to speak more than me" under oath with the special counsel, that "nobody believes in the First Amendment more than I do," that "there's nobody that respects women more than I do," that he is "the least racist person" and that ["nobody reads the Bible more than me."](#) But this is to be expected of a man with a very good brain and the best words.

Trump surprises himself with how hard he works. After his first 100 days in office, [he told Reuters](#): “This is more work than in my previous life. I thought it would be easier.” The poor guy can’t even get a dog. “I wouldn’t mind having one, honestly, but I don’t have any time,” he told supporters Monday.

Trump must work harder than his predecessors because there are more demands on him. He has to spend more time appointing staff, for example, because his appointees keep quitting. George Washington had a lot on his plate, but he didn’t have to attend [so many MAGA events](#) or craft so many Twitter insults. Lincoln fought the Civil War, but he didn’t have so many Fox News interviews or [a round of golf](#) every five days, on average.

Overworked Trump told an El Paso audience Monday night that before taking the stage, his advisers told him about a possible deal to avert a government shutdown. But Trump told them, “I don’t even want to hear about it” before his rally speech.

It’s hard to squeeze in intelligence briefings, because Trump has to spend so much time devising clever strategies. [On Tuesday](#), he disparaged a bipartisan border deal crafted to avert a shutdown but then said if a shutdown comes, “It’s the Democrats’ fault.” That’s hard to come up with!

And consider the physical stamina required. Though he is [unequivocally](#) “the healthiest individual ever elected to the presidency,” it’s hard work to manufacture [so many crises](#) over NATO, NAFTA, DACA, Iran, China and the border. One of his border crises even [required using duct tape](#).

Before Trump’s visit to far west Texas, the El Paso Times [reported](#) that violent crime in the city had fallen more than 34 percent by 2006 — *before* a border fence was built there. The city’s Republican mayor said El Paso was safe “going back to 2005.” So it took a lot of strength for Trump to declare the opposite, telling supporters Monday the mayor is “[full of crap](#).” Hard work!

Meanwhile, he continues his arduous campaign against Hillary Clinton (there were “lock her up” chants in El Paso), his tireless battle against Robert S. Mueller III’s credibility ([a Post-Schar School poll](#) finds Mueller trusted more than Trump by a 23-point margin) and his mighty struggle to shield Saudi Arabia from the consequences of its human trafficking and its murder of journalist Jamal Khashoggi.

In fact, just listing all of Trump’s hard work makes me crave some Executive Time. Wake me in an hour?

Read more from [Dana Milbank’s archive](#), [follow him on Twitter](#) or [subscribe to his updates on Facebook](#).

Read more:

[Dana Milbank: It’s obvious what Trump is doing during his Executive Time](#)

[Tom Toles: The state of the union is executive goof-off time](#)

[Jennifer Rubin: Irrelevant and incoherent Trump is upstaged in El Paso](#)

Max Boot: Trump’s superpower is his shamelessness

Dana Milbank: Trump’s golf game tells us an awful lot about Trump

Dana Milbank

Dana Milbank is an op-ed columnist. He sketches the foolish, the fallacious and the felonious in politics. Follow 
