

# Donald Rumsfeld

## Quotes

*People, Iraq, Country, President, War, Thinking, Decision, Mass Destruction,  
World, Trying, Wmd, May, Mistake, Jobs, House, Moving, Ifs, Government,  
Stupid, Responsibility*

Reduce the number of lawyers. They are like beavers - they get in the middle of the stream and dam it up.

~Donald Rumsfeld

The Secretary of Defense is not a super General or Admiral. His task is to exercise civilian control over the Department for the Commander-in-Chief and the country.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Don't necessarily avoid sharp edges. Occasionally they are necessary to leadership.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Simply stated, there is no doubt that Saddam Hussein now has weapons of mass destruction.

~Donald Rumsfeld

We know where they are. They are in the area around Tikrit and Baghdad.

~Donald Rumsfeld

We know where they are [Iraq's weapons of mass destruction]. They're in the area around Tikrit and Baghdad and east, west, south and north somewhat.

~Donald Rumsfeld

We do know of certain knowledge that he [Osama Bin Laden] is either in Afghanistan, or in some other country, or dead.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Be precise. A lack of precision is dangerous when the margin of error is small.

~Donald Rumsfeld

If you are not criticized, you may not be doing much.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Look for what's missing. Many advisors can tell a President how to improve what's proposed or what's gone amiss. Few are able to see what isn't there.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Don't think of yourself as indispensable or infallible. As Charles De Gaulle said, the cemeteries of the world are full of indispensable men.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Death has a tendency to encourage a depressing view of war.

~Donald Rumsfeld

The most underestimated risk for a politician is overexposure.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Listening to both sides does not necessarily bring about a correct judgment.

~Donald Rumsfeld

No terror state poses a greater or more immediate threat to the security of our people and the stability of the world than the regime of Saddam Hussein in Iraq.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Test ideas in the marketplace. You learn from hearing a range of perspectives. Consultation helps engender the support decisions need to be successfully implemented.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Don't speak ill of your predecessors or successors. You didn't walk in their shoes.

~Donald Rumsfeld

The purpose of terrorism is to terrorize. It's to change the behavior of the people that are being terrorized.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Don't say 'the White House wants.' Buildings can't want.

~Donald Rumsfeld

If the staff lacks policy guidance against which to test decisions, their decisions will be random.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Arguments of convenience lack integrity and inevitably trip you up.

~Donald Rumsfeld

When business accepts help from the government, it can be like going to bed with a hippopotamus. It's nice and warm for the moment, but then your bedmate rolls over and crushes you.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Congress, the press, and the bureaucracy too often focus on how much money or effort is spent, rather than whether the money or effort actually achieves the announced goal.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Don't blame the boss. He has enough problems.

~Donald Rumsfeld

To gain support in U.S. Congress and from other nations requires clarity, an acceptable mission and an explicit outcome.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Don't divide the world into "them" and "us."

~Donald Rumsfeld

Many people around the President have sizeable egos before entering government, some with good reason. Their new positions will do little to moderate their egos.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Think ahead. Don't let day-to-day operations drive out planning.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Treat each federal dollar as if it was hard earned; it was - by a taxpayer.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Don't automatically obey Presidential directives if you disagree or if you suspect he hasn't considered key aspects of the issue.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Reduce the layers of management. They put distance between the top of an organization and the customers.

~Donald Rumsfeld

The problem is the people who tend to be the best organized are the most radical and the most vicious.

~Donald Rumsfeld

You might be a cunning linguist, but I am a master debater.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Keep your sense of humor. As General Joe Stillwell said, 'The higher a monkey climbs, the more you see of his behind'.

~Donald Rumsfeld

If you try to please everybody, somebody's not going to like it.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Know that the amount of criticism you receive may correlate somewhat to the amount of publicity you receive.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Remember where you came from.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Enjoy your time in public service. It may well be one of the most interesting and challenging times of your life.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Strive to make proposed solutions as self-executing as possible. As the degree of discretion increases, so too does bureaucracy, delay, and expense.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Move decisions out to the Cabinet and agencies. Strengthen them by moving responsibility, authority, and accountability their direction.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Don't divide the world into 'them' and 'us.' Avoid infatuation with or resentment of the press, the Congress, rivals, or opponents. Accept them as facts. They have their jobs and you have yours.

~Donald Rumsfeld

In the execution of Presidential decisions work to be true to his views, in fact and tone.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Let your family, staff, and friends know that you're still the same person, despite all the publicity and notoriety that accompanies your position.

~Donald Rumsfeld

I believe what I said yesterday. I don't know what I said, but I know what I think and I assume it's what I said.

~Donald Rumsfeld

It is easier to get into something than to get out of it.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Politics is human beings; it's addition rather than subtraction.

~Donald Rumsfeld

When cutting staff at the Pentagon, don't eliminate the thin layer that assures civilian control.

~Donald Rumsfeld

I can't tell you if the use of force in Iraq today will last five days, five weeks or five months, but it won't last any longer than that.

~Donald Rumsfeld

The dead-enders are still with us, those remnants of the defeated regimes who'll go on fighting long after their cause is lost.

~Donald Rumsfeld

There are a lot of people who lie and get away with it, and that's just a fact.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Freedom's untidy, and free people are free to make mistakes and commit crimes and do bad things.

~Donald Rumsfeld

I don't know anybody that I can think of who has contended that the Iraqis had nuclear weapons.

~Donald Rumsfeld

One of your tasks is to separate the 'personal' from the 'substantive.'  
The two can become confused, especially if someone rubs the  
President wrong.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Make decisions about the President's personal security. He can  
overrule you, but don't ask him to be the one to counsel caution.

~Donald Rumsfeld

First rule of politics: you can't win unless you're on the ballot. Second  
rule: If you run, you may lose. And, if you tie, you do not win.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Imagine, a September 11 with weapons of mass destruction. It's not  
3,000. It's tens of thousands of innocent men, women and children.

~Donald Rumsfeld

In politics, every day is filled with numerous opportunities for serious  
error. Enjoy it.

~Donald Rumsfeld

When there happens to be a weapon of mass destruction suspect site  
in an area that we occupy and if people have time, they'll look at it.

~Donald Rumsfeld

There are people who in large measure have information that we need .  
. . so that we can track down the weapons of mass destruction in that  
country.

~Donald Rumsfeld

We never believed that we'd just tumble over weapons of mass  
destruction in that country.

~Donald Rumsfeld



They may have had time to destroy them, and I don't know the answer.

~Donald Rumsfeld

The Cold War was a war, and we won it.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Our task, your task... is to try to connect the dots before something happens. People say, 'Well, where's the smoking gun?' Well, we don't want to see a smoking gun from a weapon of mass destruction.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Secretary Powell and I agree on every single issue that has ever been before this administration except for those instances where Colin's still learning.

~Donald Rumsfeld

See that the President, the Cabinet and staff are informed. If cut out of the information flow, their decisions may be poor, not made, or not confidently or persuasively implemented.

~Donald Rumsfeld

We're not running out of [fixed] targets. Afghanistan is.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Five days or five months, but it certainly isn't going to last longer.

~Donald Rumsfeld

If you foul up, tell the President and correct it fast. Delay only compounds mistakes.

~Donald Rumsfeld

At 78 years old, I am not surprised at much anymore. Germany has taken divergent positions before, so has France, so has England, so has the US.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Any country on the face of the Earth with an active intelligence program knows that Iraq has weapons of mass destruction.

~Donald Rumsfeld

I am not going to give you a number for it because it's not my business to do intelligent work.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Amidst all the clutter, beyond all the obstacles, aside from all the static, are the goals set. Put your head down, do the best job possible, let the flak pass, and work towards those goals.

~Donald Rumsfeld

The country cannot afford amateur hour in the White House.

~Donald Rumsfeld

I would not say that the future is necessarily less predictable than the past. I think the past was not predictable when it started.

~Donald Rumsfeld

You're thinking of Europe as Germany and France. I don't. I think that's old Europe.

~Donald Rumsfeld

The price of being close to the President is delivering bad news. You fail him if you don't tell him the truth. Others won't do it.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Presidential leadership needn't always cost money. Look for low- and no-cost options. They can be surprisingly effective.

~Donald Rumsfeld

The way to do well is to do well.

~Donald Rumsfeld

When I served as US Ambassador to NATO in the 1970s, the center of gravity in Europe was France and Germany.

~Donald Rumsfeld

You go to war with the army you have, not the army you might want or wish to have at a later time.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Now, settle down, settle down. Hell, I'm an old man, it's early in the morning and I'm gathering my thoughts here.

~Donald Rumsfeld

It isn't making mistakes that's critical; it's correcting them and getting on with the principal task.

~Donald Rumsfeld

And there is, I am certain, among the Iraqi people a respect for the care and the precision that went into the bombing campaign.

~Donald Rumsfeld

If you can't solve a problem, make it bigger.

~Donald Rumsfeld

When starting at the bottom, be willing to learn from those at the top.

~Donald Rumsfeld

The absence of evidence is not necessarily the evidence of absence

~Donald Rumsfeld

When you're skiing, if you're not falling you're not trying.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Be yourself. Follow your instincts. Success depends, at least in part, on the ability to 'carry it off.'

~Donald Rumsfeld

Never assume the other fellow will not do something you wouldn't do.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Those who made the decisions with imperfect knowledge will be judged in hindsight by those with considerably more information at their disposal and time for reflection.

~Donald Rumsfeld

There are things that we know, and there are things that we don't know. Then there are the things that we don't even know that we don't know. Those are the things that are the hardest.

~Donald Rumsfeld

The success of an organization will depend on the people you surround yourself with.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Beware when any idea is promoted primarily because it is "bold, exciting, innovative, and new." There are many ideas that are "bold, exciting, innovative and new," but also foolish.

~Donald Rumsfeld

There will be good moments, and there will be less good moments.

~Donald Rumsfeld

There's no debate in the world as to whether people have weapons of mass destruction... We all know that. A trained ape knows that.

~Donald Rumsfeld

It is hard to put a price on some things. What is the value of having

prevented nuclear weapons from getting into the hands of a dictator like Saddam Hussein - or of Gadhafi?

~Donald Rumsfeld

General Boykin has requested that an inspector general review this matter. And I have indicated that if that's his request, I think it's appropriate.

~Donald Rumsfeld

Our goal is to defend the American people, and to eliminate Iraq's weapons of mass destruction, and to liberate the Iraqi people.

~Donald Rumsfeld

I am going to leave the future of Europe to the Europeans.

~Donald Rumsfeld

If there are people who yearn for the days when Saddam Hussein was in power, then I am not among them.

~Donald Rumsfeld

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