



Written by [Bob Adelman](#) on July 27, 2011

Obama Battles Increasing Odds for Reelection

And when they were asked, “Do you approve or disapprove of the way Obama is handling the economy?” nearly six in 10 disapproved, with more than four in 10 strongly disapproving. When asked how he was handling the federal budget deficit, 60 percent disapproved, an increase of eight percentage points since January.



Further indication of dissatisfaction was revealed by answers to “how you feel about the way the federal government works,” with an astonishing 80 percent dissatisfied, and 25 percent “angry,” up from just nine percent last November. Views on the economy were even worse: 90 percent were negative, with just 10 percent giving a positive response.

The [job approval numbers](#) from RealClearPolitics.com were equally dismal, with the average of all polls taken since early July showing an approval rating of just 45.5 percent while 49.3 percent disapproved of Obama’s job performance, close to an all-time high.

Jay Cost, writing for the *Weekly Standard*, went [several steps further](#) in analyzing Obama’s chances for reelection based upon a recent Gallup poll. Cost noted that in the upcoming election, both the Republican and Democrat parties will have the same objective: obtain a high turnout among the party faithful, and woo and win as many independents as possible. The independents were key to Obama’s victory in 2008, with job approval ratings for the President in January 2009 in the high 60s. By July of that year, his approval ratings dropped below 50 percent, and have continued to fall, with current ratings among independents barely above 40 percent. As Cost noted, “It is worth pointing out that in the last forty years, no president has ever been elected ... with less than 48 percent of the independent vote.”

Cost’s analysis is straightforward: Assuming that the election in 2012 is based upon the same electoral demographics as in 2010 (36 percent Democratic, 36 percent Republican and 28 percent independent) and further assuming that the President wins the same share of the independent vote as their current ratings indicate (42 percent), then the President has no chance. Cost concluded, “Without a noticeable change in the trends on partisan identification, it is hard to envision such a pro-Democratic electorate emerging next year.”

The President’s inability to turn the economy around despite ringing declarations that his policies would do so is also going to cost him dearly in the 2012 election. [This Mitt Romney TV ad](#) showing Obama making one such promise to college students and failing to deliver makes clear the difficulties the President will have.

{youtube width="500" height="312"}u5siQO_lFF4{/youtube}



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There is another public-perception battle that the President is losing: The public is increasingly negative toward his methods, viewing him as an emperor, giving orders from on high. Although there are no polls to measure hubris, or lack thereof, columnist George Will [put it succinctly](#):

At his Friday news conference-cum-tantrum, Barack Obama imperiously summoned congressional leaders to his presence: "I've told" them "I want them here at 11 a.m." By Saturday, his administration seemed to be cultivating chaos by suddenly postulating a new deadline: The debt-ceiling impasse must end before Asian markets opened Sunday evening Eastern time, lest the heavens fall. Those markets opened; the heavens held.... Obama has marginalized himself. Inordinate self-regard is an occupational hazard of politics and part of the job description of the rhetorical presidency, this incessant tutor. Still, upon what meat doth this our current Caesar feed that he has grown so great that he presumes to command leaders of a coequal branch of government? He once boasted (June 3, 2008) that he could influence the oceans' rise; he must be disabused of comparable delusions about controlling Congress.

If these polls are any indication of how the election might turn out in 15 months, the President will in fact be heartily "disabused" of any such beliefs in his grandeur.

Photo of Barack Obama: AP Images



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