

January 16, 2018 – DILBERT DAY

This is Dilbert Day. We collected some of [Scott Adams'](#) latest posts covering the political scene. He starts with a list of people's predictions that turned out to be wrong. These were thoughts expressed by our betters on the left. Mr. Adams suggests maybe those who held all these beliefs should stop making predictions.

*When candidate Trump first set about the job of redefining politics (and reality) back in 2015, people had lots of predictions about how things would turn out. One year isn't long enough to know everything we need to know about his presidency, but it's long enough to to check some of our predictions. As a public service, I put together a list of predictions that various people made about Trump that you can use to evaluate your own predictive powers. **Count the number of items on the list that you once predicted would be true.** I'll tell you how to evaluate your score at the end.*

Did you once believe...

Trump will never win the GOP nomination.

Trump will never win the presidency.

Stocks will drop if Trump is elected.

President Trump will deport ten million illegal immigrants. ...

Next he posted on the [Demolition President](#)

President Trump has delivered on a number of promises for his base. But there was an impressive amount of breakage along the way. You might say he President Trump did as much demolition as he did construction. The press is doing a good job of telling us what he accomplished in 2017. But they keep leaving out all the stuff he broke that probably needed to be broken. I'll fix that for you here.

GOP – *Trump broke the GOP and reconstructed it along his terms, successfully it seems.*

DNC – *The DNC has no charismatic leader, no game plan, and little money.*

Clinton Dynasty – *Done*

Bush Dynasty – *Done*

Mainstream Media – *The public learned that news coverage is based on bias as much as fact.*

Then a post on how Trump has changed our imagination.

Do you remember when candidate Trump told us (in effect) that he would be the first non-politician to win the presidency? It seemed impossible to even imagine such a thing. Then he did the impossible.

Do you remember when it was common wisdom that if the U.S. recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel it would be a huge problem? President Trump did it anyway. So far, it looks like a minor problem at most.

Do you remember when experts said President Trump shouldn't mess with the Iran nuclear deal because it could cause a huge problem for the United States and its allies? He did it anyway, and it is likely a supporting variable for the Iranian protestors who don't like how their government is creating problems that don't need to be problems. ...

... In 2015 I told you that candidate Trump would change far more than politics. I said he would change how we understand reality itself. And one of those biggest changes is in the scope of our imaginations. One year ago it was hard for me to imagine Saudi Arabia taking a sudden turn toward modernization. One year ago it was hard for me to imagine an uprising in Iran that could reshape its destiny. I assume it was hard for the Iranian public to imagine it as well. But they sure are imagining it now. ...

Trump's boast about the size and capability of his nuclear button earned his usual opprobrium from the bien pensants. Scott Adams has an answer.

On CNN yesterday, Jake Tapper described President Trump's recent behavior — including the President's tweet about having a bigger nuclear "button" than North Korea — as abnormal and unstable. In other words, crazy.

Is it?

One folksy definition of "crazy" is that it involves trying over and over again a solution that has never worked while hoping it works next time. President Trump is doing something closer to the opposite of that. He's doing something new, both strategically and verbally. To be fair, new things can be crazy too. But usually only if they don't work. When a new and unexpected thing works out well, we call it genius. And that begs the question: Is President Trump's approach to North Korea working?

We're seeing economic sanctions on North Korea that have the support of the UN Security Council. That part is working, and it took diplomatic skill to make it happen. ...

All of the above resulted in Trump earning the highest presidential approval in history.

The Small Business Optimism Index hit an all-time high. That's the new Presidential Approval Poll.

In olden days (pre-2016), candidates for president were not so different from each other. I can remember pundits complaining endlessly about how similar the Democrats and Republicans had become. In that environment, you can easily imagine someone who voted for Candidate A warming up to Candidate B. In those simpler times, a presidential approval poll meant something.

Today, a “presidential approval poll” is little more than taking attendance. If you’re a Democrat, you disapprove of President Trump as a lifestyle choice. If you voted for Trump, you probably still approve of him because you knew exactly what you were getting. And if you are an anti-Trump conservative, you allow cognitive dissonance to rule your brain and you say he’s doing a good job but you disapprove of him anyway. David Brooks accidentally described this phenomenon in [this article](#).

I contend that business optimism — and small business optimism in particular — are the new standard for presidential approval because “economics” captures most of what a president influences.

If a president starts a war, or threatens to start one, the economy flinches.

If a president starts a trade war, or threatens one, the economy flinches.

If a president is tearing apart the fabric of civilization in one way or another, the economy collapses.

If a big terror attack succeeds on the homeland, the economy flinches. ...

Dilbert's Blog

[How to Determine If You Should Talk About Politics in Public](#)

by Scott Adams

When candidate Trump first set about the job of redefining politics (and reality) back in 2015, people had lots of predictions about how things would turn out. One year isn’t long enough to know everything we need to know about his presidency, but it’s long enough to check *some* of our predictions. As a public service, I put together a list of predictions that various people made about Trump that you can use to evaluate your own predictive powers. **Count the number of items on the list that you once predicted would be true.** I’ll tell you how to evaluate your score at the end.

Did you once believe...

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Trump will never win the presidency.

Stocks will drop if Trump is elected.

President Trump will deport ten million illegal immigrants.

Trump will be gone (impeached, jailed, or quit) by end of 2017.

Trump's immigration ban on several Muslim countries will be found unconstitutional.

Trump colluded with Russia, and that's a crime.

Trump obstructed justice (a crime) by firing Comey.

Trump's skills as a "con man" might get him elected but it won't transfer into doing the job of president.

Trump's decision to recognize Jerusalem as the capital of Israel will cause huge problems.

Trump's tweeting will cause huge problems.

GOP will never embrace Trump.

Trump will get nothing important done.

Trump will not work effectively with leaders of other countries.

GOP senators will vote against GOP priorities because of President Trump's mean tweets.

Trump will not nominate qualified judges to the Supreme Court.

Trump is incompetent.

Presidential approval polls are a good predictor of how a president will perform.

The military won't follow Trump's orders.

GDP will never stay above 3%.

I didn't get any of those predictions wrong. But if you got 15 or more wrong, you might want to consider never saying anything about politics out loud again for the rest of your life. Just a suggestion.



Clinton supporter expresses surprise at his lack of prescience

Okay, okay. I know you are quibbling with a few items I included on the list. Maybe you think the bad news for Trump — such as the alleged Russia problems — will sink Trump eventually. We can revisit this list next year. But if you are wrong for three years straight — about almost everything Trump-related — please adjust your confidence in your predictive powers accordingly.

If you got 15 or more of those predictions wrong, please consider reading a copy of my book, [Win Bigly](#), to learn how to use what I call the Persuasion Filter to predict better.

Dilbert's Blog **The Demolition President** by Scott Adams

President Trump has delivered on a number of promises for his base. But there was an impressive amount of breakage along the way. You might say he President Trump did as much demolition as he did construction. The press is doing a good job of telling us what he accomplished in 2017. But they keep leaving out all the stuff he broke that probably needed to be broken. I'll fix that for you here.

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NFL – Ratings down, attendance down.



If President Trump were a large piece of construction equipment, which one would he be?

FBI (leadership) – The FBI as a whole is still highly credible, but the leadership is not.

Pundits – Nearly all the pundits were wrong about Trump's nomination, election, and successful (by Republican standards) first year.

Government Regulations – For good or bad, we have fewer regulations now.

Hollywood – Big stars are alienating 40% of their potential audience whenever they take time off from groping.

North Korea – They used to have a pathetic but functioning economy. That situation is changing rapidly.

ISIS – Remember ISIS? They used to be a big deal.

TPP – Pulled out

Paris Climate Accord – Pulled out

Reality – I told you in 2015 that candidate Trump would change more than politics. I told you he would change the way we saw reality. Do you remember when you thought the news reported facts and that humans used those facts to make reasoned decisions? You probably don't think that anymore.

I'm probably leaving out some stuff that got broken. It's been a busy year.

Dilbert's Blog

[How President Trump Changed Your Imagination](#)

by Scott Adams

Do you remember when candidate Trump told us (in effect) that he would be the first non-politician to win the presidency? It seemed impossible to even imagine such a thing. Then he did the impossible.

Do you remember when it was common wisdom that if the U.S. recognized Jerusalem as the capital of Israel it would be a huge problem? President Trump did it anyway. So far, it looks like a minor problem at most.

Do you remember when experts said President Trump shouldn't mess with the Iran nuclear deal because it could cause a huge problem for the United States and its allies? He did it anyway, and it is likely a supporting variable for the Iranian protestors who don't like how their government is creating problems that don't need to be problems.

Do you remember when experts said China will never help squeeze the economy of North Korea because China fears a refugee crisis? President Trump encouraged China to squeeze anyway. Then he helpfully provided satellite photos of tankers cheating on the high seas. After South Korea grabbed and held a second cheating tanker, the economics of smuggling oil have

turned negative, or will soon. And North Korea is sounding — at least to my ears — more flexible than ever.



That branch is stronger than you imagined.

Do you remember when it was common wisdom that we couldn't put enough pressure on Pakistan to make them stop harboring terrorists because Pakistan is also an ally in many ways? President Trump just cut off their funding and put them on notice.

Do you remember when experts said withdrawing from the Paris Climate Accord would be a catastrophe? President Trump did it anyway because he didn't like the deal. I've seen no indication that exiting the deal made the climate worse. Here I'm only talking about the quality of the Accord and what little impact it would have had in the best case scenario.

The big wildcard in our many "impossibles" has to do with the tax bill and the deficit. Experts say it is impossible to get enough growth from the tax bill to pay for the deficit. But the experts are blind to the persuasion of it all. If President Trump persuades the economy higher, let's say to 5-6% GDP, there's a good chance he will accomplish the impossible once again and pay for those tax cuts. The tax cuts alone won't get us to that GDP, but as part of a larger package of persuasion-by-optimism, it is strong sauce.

The meta-impact of President Trump routinely doing the "impossible" is that it changes how all of us view our world. If Trump can keep doing the impossible, time and time again, why can't we?

Sometimes things are literally impossible. But much of the time we are only limited by our imaginations. Many of us simply couldn't *imagine* that a number of the things President Trump has done would work out well. These were not simple surprises; these were failures of our imagination.

In 2015 I told you that candidate Trump would change far more than politics. I said he would change how we understand reality itself. And one of those biggest changes is in the scope of our imaginations. One year ago it was hard for me to imagine Saudi Arabia taking a sudden turn toward modernization. One year ago it was hard for me to imagine an uprising in Iran that could

reshape its destiny. I assume it was hard for the Iranian public to imagine it as well. But they sure are imagining it now.

President Trump isn't the only variable in the world. But he does create a pattern in our minds of making the impossible seem achievable. Don't underestimate the impact that pattern has on the imaginations of everyone watching.

And don't be surprised if 2018 is the year when people all over the world shed their mental prisons and take on the "impossibles" in ways we have never seen. Thanks to President Trump, people everywhere are beginning to recognize the difference between real impossibilities and simple failures of imagination.

Welcome to ***The Golden Age***. It starts now.

Dilbert's Blog

[Is President Trump's Nuclear Button Tweet a Sign of Insanity?](#)

by Scott Adams

On CNN yesterday, Jake Tapper described President Trump's recent behavior — including the President's tweet about having a bigger nuclear "button" than North Korea — as abnormal and unstable. In other words, crazy.

Is it?

One folksy definition of "crazy" is that it involves trying over and over again a solution that has never worked while hoping it works next time. President Trump is doing something closer to the opposite of that. He's doing something new, both strategically and verbally. To be fair, new things can be crazy too. But usually only if they don't work. When a new and unexpected thing works out well, we call it genius. And that begs the question: Is President Trump's approach to North Korea working?

We're seeing economic sanctions on North Korea that have the support of the UN Security Council. That part is working, and it took diplomatic skill to make it happen.

But we also see satellite images of tankers smuggling oil into North Korea. The sanctions looked as if they were not effective until South Korea detained two tankers involved in smuggling oil to North Korea. Grabbing two tankers doesn't do much in terms of limiting supply, but it does dramatically change the perceived economics of being a smuggler. And if grabbing two tankers doesn't get the message across, South Korea can keep detaining tankers until the economics do change. North Korea would be willing to take big risks to break the sanctions, but the shipping companies on which they depend will not. Shipping companies will only participate in wrongdoing when they are confident they won't get caught. That calculation changed when South Korea detained two tankers.

I told you months ago that the United States was going to war with corporations that trade with North Korea. We're seeing that with the detained tankers. Whoever owns them is bleeding cash

while they sit unused. And I speculate that our intelligence services are making life difficult for other CEOs and corporations involved in violating the economic sanctions. President Trump knows he doesn't need to stop all of the smuggling and cheating — he only needs to increase the risk until it is uneconomical for the companies involved. We're heading in that direction.

For the first time I can recall, time is on our side with North Korea. Every passing day sees North Korea's economy shrinking while South Korea and America thrive. We're effectively already at war and winning hard. The longer North Korea waits to get serious about negotiating, the weaker their hand.

A recent statement out of North Korea said, in effect, that they need their nuclear weapons as a deterrent because the United States is performing war games along its border. The way I interpret North Korea's statement is that they are getting flexible. This is the first time I've heard North Korea speak of their nukes as conditional on what we do. In other words, they are open to denuclearizing if we reduce their perceived military risk. They haven't said that directly. But that's how I read it.

North Korea recently made friendly gestures toward South Korea, offering to participate in the upcoming Olympics and opening cross-border communications for the first time in a year. The trend we are seeing is that the tougher the sanctions and rhetoric from the United States, the more flexible North Korea is becoming.

But let's talk about President Trump's latest tweet about North Korea. Here is the text:

"North Korean Leader Kim Jong Un just stated that the "Nuclear Button is on his desk at all times." Will someone from his depleted and food starved regime please inform him that I too have a Nuclear Button, but it is a much bigger & more powerful one than his, and my Button works!"

Here we see President Trump "pacing" (or matching) the hyperbolic rhetoric of Kim Jung Un. The two leaders are trash-talking each other like sports rivals. But what is missed in the hysterics over wording is that President Trump and Kim Jung Un are negotiating personally, albeit in public. And I think it is safe to say both players know they are being over-the-top with their trash-talk. The odds of a nuclear miscalculation based on anything said so far is effectively zero. And if the rhetoric ratchets up to a new level of hyperbole, I would still see no additional risk. President Trump and Kim Jong Un have demonstrated they know the difference between trash-talk and action.

The Persuasion Filter says this public trash-talking probably **lowers** our risk of a nuclear accident. If you don't share the kind of personality we are seeing displayed by both leaders, you might miss the biggest variable in play here. What I see is two unconventional leaders already in conversation, getting a feel for the other, and on some level enjoying the exchange. You know President Trump loves this sort of verbal battle, and he's good at it. Now keep in mind that North Korea is a tiny country that would normally be below America's radar. But Kim Jong Un has the full attention of the President of the United States and is trash-talking **with** him in public. I have to think he enjoys the verbal jousting on some level, same as President Trump.

So while it might look to many observers as two crazy leaders heading for a nuclear showdown, to me it looks like two colorful characters who probably have a weird kind of respect for each other. Let me put it another way. Which of these two situations carries a greater risk of accidental nuclear war?

1. Two nuclear foes who have no communication and are trying to interpret the actions of the other.
2. Two nuclear foes trash-talking each other (with humor) in front of the world

I'll take option two every time. When Kim Jong Un and President Trump are trash-talking in public with hyperbolic humor, **they're talking**. The only risk is that one of them doesn't understand the other is being over-the-top for effect. And I see no real risk of that. They both know what they are getting with the other.

I'd be worried if I saw Kim Jong Un yammering about the latest round of economic sanctions being an act of war. But instead he's talking of participating in the Olympics in South Korea. That sounds like a leader who is trying to avoid war.

If you are a literal type of person who doesn't recognize hyperbole or humor, I can see how this situation looks scary. But I promise you neither leader has a physical "button" on his desk, of any size, to launch a nuclear attack. And I feel confident that both leaders understand humor and hyperbole when they see it.

My view on all of this is that we are closer than we have ever been to a peace deal that results in a non-nuclear North Korea. Everything I see suggests President Trump is successfully "setting the table," as he likes to say, for productive talks. Can the [hundred-year plan for reunification](#) be far away?

Dilbert's Blog

[President Trump Earns the Highest Presidential Approval Level of All Time](#)

by Scott Adams

The [Small Business Optimism Index](#) hit an all-time high. That's the new Presidential Approval Poll.

In olden days (pre-2016), candidates for president were not so different from each other. I can remember pundits complaining endlessly about how similar the Democrats and Republicans had become. In that environment, you can easily imagine someone who voted for Candidate A warming up to Candidate B. In those simpler times, a presidential approval poll meant something.

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If a big terror attack succeeds on the homeland, the economy flinches.

If immigration is allowed in large numbers, the economy feels it.

I could go on. The point is that all of the “big” issues directly influence the economy via their impact on our psychology and our resources. In a free, capitalist country, “the economy” captures all the goodness and badness of a presidency without really trying. And the measure that best reflects the future of the economy, in my opinion, is small business optimism.

Big businesses can do fine with a president who promotes policies that favor big corporations, even if the rest of the country is suffering. But when small business owners are feeling good about the economy, that means the president is doing a more bottoms-up job of getting things right. President Trump has focused on bottoms-up economics from the start, meaning jobs and lessened regulations. Apparently that is working.

I have been telling you for two years straight that psychology drives the economy, and that a Master Persuader such as President Trump can directly influence psychology and optimism. We see him doing that right before our eyes.

At the same time President Trump is “talking up” our economy, he’s talking North Korea’s economy to ruin. If you own a company that is involved in smuggling with North Korea, you probably noticed that South Korea nabbed two tankers that satellite photos spotted cheating. That’s going to be a financial disaster for those shipping companies. The psychology of the corporations involved in smuggling just changed, courtesy of the Master Persuader who has no intention of taking his boot off the North Korean economy until they lose their nukes. This approach is already causing North Korea to get flexible, at least in the talking sense.

Keep in mind that all of the personality negatives that are reflected in the old-timey presidential approval polls are exactly what is scaring North Korea into the arms of “good cop” South Korea. President Trump’s tweets didn’t cause a war; they caused North Korean flexibility, exactly as I predicted.

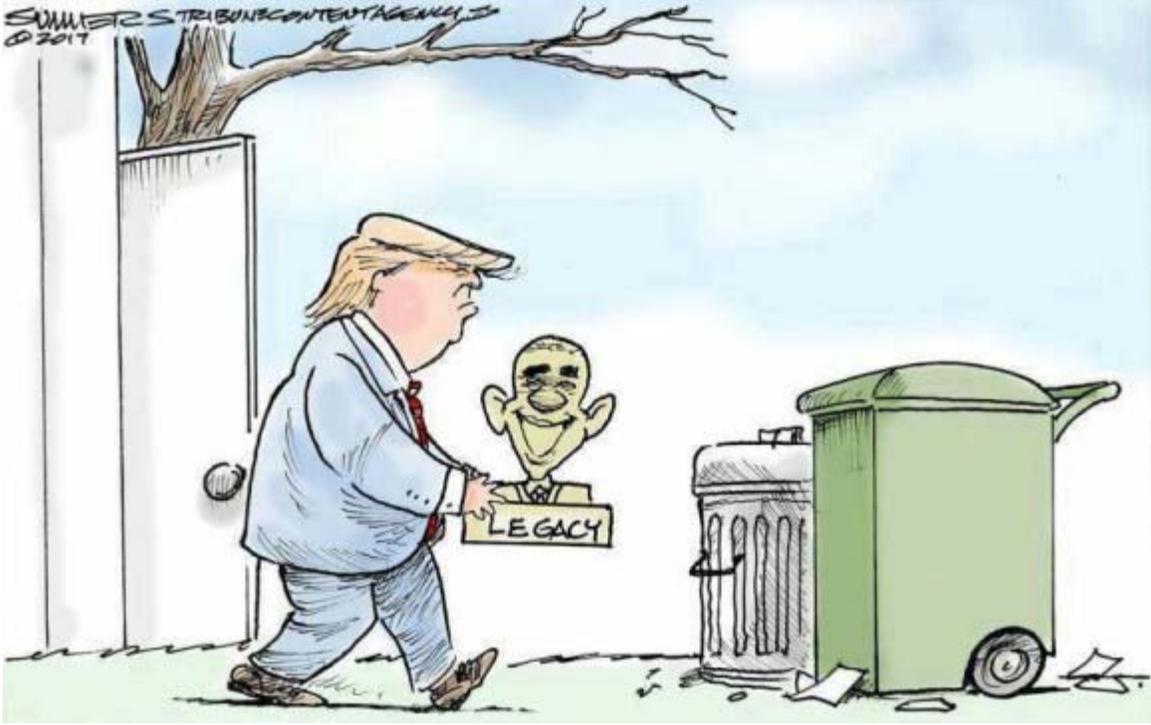
And if you are still worried about President Trump’s mental health, I’ll do a Periscope later today to tell you how badly the media has abused the public on that topic. For a preview, check out [this interview that Dr. Drew did with Dr. Bandy Lee](#) on her opinions of President Trump’s mental health. The media reported her as saying he was mentally unfit. That wasn’t the case. She has no professional opinion on the President’s mental capacity because she has never met him. Her primary concern is about *societal violence* as a result of his presidency. That is completely different from what has been reported all week. I nominate this story for the Fake News Awards. I think it can be a finalist.





It is so cold,
Elizabeth
Warren
is claiming
to be an
Eskimo!





~~IF~~ TRUMP'S TAX
CUTS ARE
APPROVED,
YOU CAN CHECK
THE "NOT MY
PRESIDENT" BOX ON
YOUR TAX RETURN
TO CONTINUE PAYING
THE HIGHER
OBAMA RATES.

MY HOBBIES INCLUDE



**TAKING LSD AND
RESCUING STRAY DOGS**

WHICH DO YOU PREFER?

Wooden Stock



Polymer Stock



Laughing Stock



NationalGunRights.org

**Whaddaya mean I'll
be grandfathered
in?**



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