

Mitt Romney - Republican

Mitt Romney was born March 12, 1947, in Detroit, Michigan. He comes from a political family; his father was Michigan Governor George W. Romney, who also made a Presidential run in 1968, and his mother ran for U.S. Senate in 1970. He graduated from the Cranbrook School in Bloomfield Hills, Michigan, and then attended Stanford University briefly before leaving to begin a 30 month mission in Europe as a missionary for the Mormon Church.

After this, he attended Brigham Young University and got a Bachelor of Arts degree by 1971. He then attended in a joint JD/MBA program between Harvard Law School and Harvard Business School, from which he earned a Juris Doctor for law and an MBA Master of Business Administration. This gives him the rare case of being a lawyer, business manager, missionary, and member of a family with political connections all at the same time.

In fact, his ties to the Mormon church are deeper than usual; his great-great-grandfather, Parley P. Pratt, was one of the founding members of the Mormon religion. For his part, he has served as a part-time lay minister, and has also served as stake president in his church. However, he has stated that he believes that "a president must serve only the common cause of the people of the United States", and he has proposed to serve no single religion, group, cause, nor interest.

Mitt Romney's first job after graduating was as a member of Boston Consulting Group in 1974. Then he moved to another Boston-based management consulting firm, Bain & Company, Inc., where he served as vice president for six years. In 1984, he founded his own company, Bain Capital, which he served as CEO for 14 years. In the process, he enjoyed phenomenal business success, either investing in or buying companies including Staples, Brookstone, Domino's, Sealy Corporation and Sports Authority.

In 1990, he returned to Bain & Company as a favor to bail out the ailing corporation. He took over management and turned it around into a profitable business again within a year's time. Beginning in 1998, he also headed the 2002 Salt Lake City Olympic Games Organizing Committee, and again turned it into business success. As a result of his business smarts, he has a net worth estimated around \$230 million.

He had a less successful start in politics, when he lost a bid for U.S. Senate to Senator Ted Kennedy in 1994. Biding his time in the business sector, he ran again in 2002, this time for Governor of Massachusetts, and won, being sworn in on January 2, 2003. Putting his amazing financial prowess to work for the

government, he walked in with a \$3 billion deficit and managed the state back into the black ink, into a \$700 million surplus by 2006. However, he did this by raising taxes and fees, closing tax loopholes, and cutting spending by \$1.6 billion, including \$700 million in reductions in state aid to cities and towns. In other words, the citizens bailed out the state, under his supervision.

Being Governor of Massachusetts also placed him in the hot seat regarding same-sex marriage, when the Massachusetts Supreme Judicial Court made the decision for legalizing same-sex marriages in November of 2003. Caught in the middle between a Supreme Court ruling and his religious beliefs, he compromised with instead only allowing same-sex civil unions, but later reneged and went back to banning them wholesale. In 2005, he announced that he would not seek a second term, and his term as Governor ended in 2007, declaring his candidacy for United States President almost the same day.

Mitt Romney is seen as a hard-right religion-based Republican, who capitalizes on his business acumen. He can count on the support of the Mormon church, the business sector, and financially concerned citizens who are critical of current Federal fiscal policy which has the country currently in a massive debt. He also brings a hefty bankroll to the table, having supplied over \$17 million to his own campaign, staying easily ahead of other candidates who must count on campaign contributions.

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