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NATIONAL: MONMOUTH POLL 2016 OUTLOOK

Varying strengths in GOP field, word clouds, and more

West Long Branch, NJ – The latest national **Monmouth University Poll** of registered voters finds the potential Republican candidates for president in 2016 have varying bases of strength. On the Democratic side, it is all Hillary Clinton.

2016 GOP field vs. Clinton

The poll posed four hypothetical 2016 match-ups with Hillary Clinton as the Democratic nominee running against Republicans Chris Christie, Jeb Bush, Marco Rubio, and Ted Cruz. Christie comes closest in national preference, trailing Clinton by just 4 points, 43% to 39%. Bush is behind Clinton by 10 points, 47% to 37%, and Rubio trails by 11 points, 47% to 36%. Cruz is behind Clinton by 16 points, 48% to 32%. Cruz is also the least well-known of the potential GOP field and may in fact be ineligible to run due to his birth in Canada.

The poll looked specifically at how each contest faired in different parts of the country based on state level results in the 2012 election. In last year's presidential contest, ten states were won by a margin of 7 percentage points or less. Barack Obama won nine of these Swing States, but his total vote margin for all Swing States combined was just 3 points. Another ten states are considered Leaning States, where the winning margin was between 7 and 12 points. Mitt Romney won six of these states, but his total vote margin was less than 2 points for all ten states combined. The remaining states are divided into solid Red and Blue states.

According to the poll, Christie, Bush, and Rubio perform about the same in the Swing States. However, all three lose to Clinton in the Swing States by between 7 and 9 points. They also do about the same in the Red States, with each leading Clinton by 6 to 8 points. The Leaning States are a different story. Bush (-17 points) and Rubio (-20 points) trail Clinton in the

Leaning States, but Christie leads Clinton by 2 points in this important bulwark for Republicans. Christie also does better than Bush and Rubio in the Blue States, but it is still a losing proposition for all three Republicans – Christie is down 13 points to Clinton in the Blue States compared to a 20 point deficit for both Bush and Rubio. Cruz trails Clinton in all four state groupings, Swing (-20), Leaning (-15), Blue (-20) and Red (-5).

"Chris Christie appears strong everywhere but in the swing states, which means that any Republican running against Hillary Clinton would still have a tough path to 270 Electoral College votes, which are the only votes that matter," said Patrick Murray, director of the Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, New Jersey.
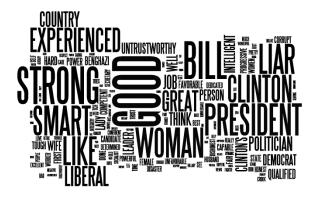
Voter impressions of the field

Clinton tops the list in favorable ratings, with 52% of American voters viewing her positively and 38% holding a negative opinion of the former First Lady, New York Senator, and Secretary of State. Her fellow Democrat, Vice President Joe Biden, though, has a much less positive rating of just 35% favorable to 51% unfavorable. Another potential Democratic candidate for 2016, New York Governor Andrew Cuomo is not as widely known among voters and has a split 24% favorable to 29% unfavorable rating.

Among nine Republicans tested in the poll, New Jersey Governor Chris Christie has a 49% favorable to 20% unfavorable rating among American voters and Wisconsin Congressman Paul Ryan has a 41% to 33% rating. Former Florida Governor Jeb Bush comes in at a split 39% favorable to 38% unfavorable rating, Kentucky Senator Rand Paul has a 34% to 28% rating, and Florida Senator Marco Rubio has a 33% to 26% rating. Former Alaska Governor and nominee for Vice President Sarah Palin has a 26% favorable rating coupled with a very large 61% unfavorable rating from all voters. Former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum earns a 24% favorable to 34% unfavorable rating, Texas Senator Ted Cruz has a 22% to 24% rating, and Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker has a 14% to 21% rating.
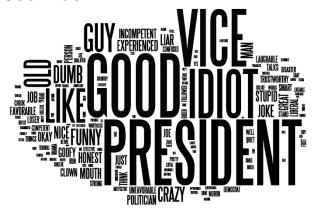
At this early stage of the 2016 process, the images these contenders bring to mind are perhaps even more telling than their overall ratings. The Monmouth University Poll asked voters to name the first word or phrase that comes to mind for five of these potential candidates.
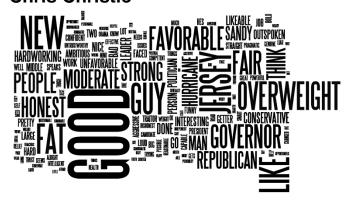
Hillary Clinton

For Hillary Clinton, intelligence (6%) and strength (5%) are the positive personal qualities that most come to mind. On the negative side, being dishonest (8%) is the most common attribute used to describe her. Other common impressions include her presidential ambitions (8%), her partisan ideology (6%) and her husband, former Pres. Bill Clinton (6%).

Joe Biden

For Joe Biden, positive qualities are led by a general sense that he is likable (10%). On the negative side, voters say he is not smart (9%) or is someone they don't take seriously (8%). His current position as Vice President (9%) is also a common image that is brought to mind for voters.

Chris Christie

For Chris Christie, being honest and straightforward (5%) is the positive personal attribute that most comes to mind. On the negative side, being an opportunist (3%) or a bully (2%) stand out as terms used to describe him. Also, 7% mention Christie's weight – positive, negative, or neutral – as the image that first comes to mind when voters think of him. Other common impressions include his role as New Jersey governor (6%) and his potential presidential candidacy (4%).

Jeb Bush

For Jeb Bush, his family connections to two former presidents (23%) are by far the most prominent image that comes to mind for voters. On the positive side, voters find him generally likable (8%). On the negative side, the leading image is that he is dishonest (5%).

Marco Rubio

For Marco Rubio, a range of positive qualities are mentioned by voters although general references to his relative youth (4%) and his Cuban heritage (4%) are brought to mind for a number of voters. However, nearly half (48%) of voters aren't familiar enough with Rubio to come up with a word or phrase to describe him.
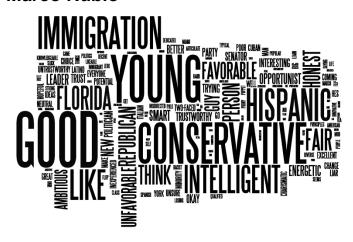
[*Note: full size images of these word clouds can be found at http://monmouthpoll.blogspot.com/*]

GOP field favorability ratings by party

The GOP nomination, though, will not be won among all voters but among the party's base. Rep. Ryan, Gov. Bush, and Sen. Rubio have the highest net positive ratings with their fellow GOP voters, whereas Gov. Christie's overall rating comes more from independent voters than from his fellow Republicans.

Republican voters give Ryan a net +70 personal rating (76% favorable to 6% unfavorable), Bush a net +62 (76%-14%), and Rubio a net +60 (64% to 4%). Christie earns a lower +36 net rating (54% to 18%) from his fellow Republicans, which is similar to the +39 net in-party rating for Paul (51% to 12%). Cruz clocks in at a net +28 (40% to 12%), Palin has a net +27 (56% to 29%), Santorum has a net +26 (46% to 20%), and Walker has a net +21 (30% to

9%) rating among Republican voters. It should be noted that Cruz and Walker are not as well-known as the others within their own party. [*Note: the margin of error for the Republican sub-sample on favorability ratings is +/-9%.*]

"While Christie and Paul duke it out in a civil liberties versus national security debate, neither of the two garners the same amount of GOP affection as Ryan, Rubio, or Bush," said poll director Patrick Murray. "But Christie does far better among independent voters than any of his fellow Republicans."

Among independent voters, Christie earns a net +34 personal rating (53% favorable to 19% unfavorable), which puts him well ahead of Paul at +16 (41% to 25%), Ryan at +12 (43% to 31%), Rubio at +8 (32% to 24%), and Bush at +3 (37% to 34%). None of the other Republicans muster a net positive rating from independent voters, including Cruz at an even split (23% favorable to 23% unfavorable), Walker at -8 (12% to 20%), Santorum at -13 (22% to 35%), and Palin at -39 (23% to 62%).

Chris Christie even does better than Hillary Clinton among independent voters. Clinton has a net +10 rating (48% favorable to 38% unfavorable) among this voting bloc. [*Note: the margin of error for the independent voter sub-sample on favorability ratings is +/-7%.*]

The latest *Monmouth University Poll* was conducted by telephone with 850 registered voters in the United States from July 25 to 30, 2013. This sample has a margin of error of ± 3.4 percent. The poll was conducted by the Monmouth University Polling Institute in West Long Branch, New Jersey.

DATA TABLES

The questions referred to in this release are as follows:
(* Some columns may not add to 100% due to rounding.)

[*QUESTIONS 1 THROUGH 4 WERE ROTATED*]
1. Who would you vote for if the candidates were Chris Christie the Republican and Hillary Clinton the Democrat? [*NAMES WERE ROTATED*]

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Christie	**39%**	73%	43%	8%	42%	35%	39%	41%	43%	34%
Clinton	**43%**	11%	33%	81%	39%	47%	46%	39%	37%	47%
(VOL) Other candidate	**4%**	3%	6%	2%	6%	2%	5%	2%	6%	4%
(VOL) Undecided	**14%**	13%	18%	9%	13%	15%	11%	18%	14%	15%

2. Who would you vote for if the candidates were Marco Rubio the Republican and Hillary Clinton the Democrat? [*NAMES WERE ROTATED*]

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Rubio	**36%**	78%	36%	6%	40%	33%	41%	29%	43%	31%
Clinton	**47%**	9%	40%	85%	42%	52%	50%	49%	37%	51%
(VOL) Other candidate	**4%**	2%	6%	1%	5%	2%	4%	2%	5%	4%
(VOL) Undecided	**13%**	11%	18%	8%	13%	14%	5%	21%	15%	14%

3. Who would you vote for if the candidates were Jeb Bush the Republican and Hillary Clinton the Democrat? [*NAMES WERE ROTATED*]

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Bush	**37%**	82%	36%	8%	42%	34%	41%	29%	48%	31%
Clinton	**47%**	10%	40%	86%	42%	52%	49%	46%	40%	51%
(VOL) Other candidate	**4%**	2%	7%	1%	6%	2%	3%	3%	3%	6%
(VOL) Undecided	**11%**	6%	18%	6%	10%	12%	6%	22%	9%	12%

4. Who would you vote for if the candidates were Ted Cruz the Republican and Hillary Clinton the Democrat? [*NAMES WERE ROTATED*]

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Cruz	**32%**	69%	30%	6%	34%	30%	31%	31%	38%	29%
Clinton	**48%**	11%	41%	84%	44%	51%	51%	46%	43%	49%
(VOL) Other candidate	**4%**	2%	6%	1%	5%	2%	3%	3%	4%	4%
(VOL) Undecided	**17%**	18%	23%	9%	17%	17%	16%	21%	14%	18%

[*QUESTION 5 WAS ASKED OF A RANDOMIZED SPLIT-SAMPLE: moe= + 4.8%*]

5. I'm going to read you a few names of people who might run for president in 2016. Please tell me if your general impression of each is favorable or unfavorable, or if you don't really have an opinion. [*NAMES WERE ROTATED*]

Former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Favorable	**52%**	14%	48%	85%	49%	55%	59%	46%	47%	53%
Unfavorable	**38%**	79%	38%	10%	41%	36%	40%	43%	45%	30%
No opinion	**10%**	8%	14%	5%	10%	9%	2%	10%	8%	17%

Vice President Joe Biden

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Favorable	**35%**	10%	29%	60%	36%	35%	38%	33%	27%	39%
Unfavorable	**51%**	86%	53%	26%	55%	47%	53%	55%	56%	43%
No opinion	**14%**	4%	18%	15%	10%	18%	10%	12%	17%	17%

New Jersey Governor Chris Christie

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Favorable	**49%**	54%	53%	39%	53%	46%	52%	46%	51%	46%
Unfavorable	**20%**	18%	19%	26%	20%	21%	15%	20%	17%	27%
No opinion	**31%**	27%	29%	35%	28%	33%	32%	34%	33%	26%

Florida Senator Marco Rubio

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Favorable	**33%**	64%	32%	12%	39%	28%	42%	30%	33%	27%
Unfavorable	**26%**	4%	24%	44%	24%	28%	25%	24%	25%	30%
No opinion	**41%**	31%	44%	44%	38%	44%	33%	46%	43%	43%

Former Pennsylvania Senator Rick Santorum

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Favorable	**24%**	46%	22%	12%	23%	25%	35%	23%	24%	17%
Unfavorable	**34%**	20%	35%	45%	39%	31%	37%	30%	34%	35%
No opinion	**41%**	34%	43%	42%	38%	44%	28%	47%	42%	48%

Wisconsin Congressman Paul Ryan

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Favorable	**41%**	76%	43%	12%	43%	39%	42%	50%	40%	36%
Unfavorable	**33%**	6%	31%	56%	32%	33%	38%	29%	28%	34%
No opinion	**27%**	18%	26%	33%	25%	28%	20%	22%	33%	30%

New York Governor Andrew Cuomo

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Favorable	**24%**	12%	25%	31%	28%	19%	16%	32%	23%	26%
Unfavorable	**29%**	42%	27%	22%	31%	27%	36%	24%	30%	26%
No opinion	**47%**	46%	48%	47%	40%	53%	48%	45%	48%	48%

Former Florida Governor Jeb Bush

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Favorable	**39%**	76%	37%	13%	43%	34%	45%	26%	48%	33%
Unfavorable	**38%**	14%	34%	62%	37%	39%	40%	46%	26%	41%
No opinion	**23%**	10%	29%	26%	20%	27%	14%	28%	26%	25%

Texas Senator Ted Cruz

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Favorable	**22%**	40%	23%	8%	24%	20%	20%	16%	35%	18%
Unfavorable	**24%**	12%	23%	35%	29%	19%	28%	23%	13%	28%
No opinion	**54%**	49%	55%	57%	47%	60%	52%	61%	51%	54%

Kentucky Senator Rand Paul

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Favorable	**34%**	51%	41%	11%	43%	25%	37%	31%	46%	24%
Unfavorable	**28%**	12%	25%	46%	24%	32%	28%	30%	23%	32%
No opinion	**38%**	37%	34%	43%	32%	43%	35%	39%	30%	45%

Wisconsin Governor Scott Walker

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Favorable	**14%**	30%	12%	4%	18%	10%	22%	11%	16%	8%
Unfavorable	**21%**	9%	20%	32%	25%	17%	23%	25%	9%	26%
No opinion	**64%**	61%	68%	64%	56%	72%	56%	64%	75%	65%

Former Alaska Governor Sarah Palin

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER		2012 SWING STATES			
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female	Swing <7%	Lean 7-12%	Red >12%	Blue >12%
Favorable	**26%**	56%	23%	8%	31%	22%	22%	20%	45%	19%
Unfavorable	**61%**	29%	62%	82%	57%	64%	67%	65%	42%	66%
No opinion	**13%**	16%	15%	10%	12%	15%	11%	15%	14%	14%

[*QUESTIONS 6 THROUGH 10 WERE ROTATED*]

6. What is the first word or phrase that comes to mind when you think of Hillary Clinton?

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER	
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female
Competent, capable, experienced	**3%**	1%	4%	4%	3%	4%
Intelligent, smart	**6%**	2%	4%	14%	6%	7%
Strong	**5%**	3%	4%	8%	3%	7%
Determined, hard worker	**1%**	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Fighter, brave, tough	**2%**	1%	2%	3%	2%	2%
Honest, fair	**2%**	0%	1%	4%	1%	2%
Good, great	**4%**	0%	2%	10%	4%	5%
I like her	**4%**	2%	3%	5%	5%	3%
Other positive qualities	**10%**	3%	9%	16%	9%	10%
Party, ideology	**6%**	9%	7%	3%	8%	5%
Policy positions	**2%**	2%	1%	5%	2%	3%
Sec of State	**4%**	6%	3%	5%	4%	4%
Benghazi	**1%**	1%	1%	0%	1%	1%
Gender	**4%**	2%	4%	6%	2%	6%
Bill Clinton	**6%**	6%	9%	3%	6%	7%
Presidential ambitions	**8%**	7%	6%	11%	9%	8%
Corrupt, dishonest	**8%**	16%	8%	1%	9%	6%
I dislike her	**5%**	11%	5%	1%	4%	6%
Other negative qualities	**9%**	17%	11%	1%	10%	8%
Other	**8%**	8%	10%	7%	11%	6%
No response	**8%**	6%	11%	4%	8%	8%

7. What is the first word or phrase that comes to mind when you think of Chris Christie?

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER	
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female
Competent, capable, experienced	**1%**	0%	1%	2%	0%	1%
Intelligent, smart	**1%**	1%	0%	2%	1%	1%
Strong, leader	**2%**	3%	2%	2%	2%	3%
Determined, hard worker	**2%**	2%	3%	2%	1%	3%
Fighter, brave, tough	**3%**	3%	4%	2%	4%	3%
Honest, straightforward	**5%**	4%	6%	6%	5%	6%
Good, great	**4%**	4%	3%	4%	5%	2%
I like him	**5%**	6%	5%	6%	5%	6%
Other positive qualities	**3%**	1%	4%	3%	4%	3%
New Jersey, job as governor	**6%**	8%	6%	4%	6%	6%
Hurricane Sandy	**1%**	1%	2%	1%	1%	1%
Party, ideology	**6%**	9%	5%	5%	7%	5%
Policy positions	**1%**	0%	1%	3%	2%	1%
Presidential candidate	**4%**	6%	4%	4%	4%	5%
Weight, fat	**7%**	8%	5%	7%	8%	6%
Bully, loud	**2%**	3%	2%	1%	1%	3%
Opportunist, untrustworthy	**3%**	2%	4%	2%	3%	3%
Other negative qualities	**7%**	8%	7%	8%	8%	7%
Other	**6%**	6%	8%	4%	8%	5%
No response	**31%**	28%	31%	33%	27%	35%

8. What is the first word or phrase that comes to mind when you think of Marco Rubio?

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER	
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female
Competent, capable	**1%**	1%	1%	0%	1%	0%
Intelligent, smart	**3%**	6%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Up and coming	**1%**	1%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Determined, energetic	**1%**	2%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Fighter, brave, tough	**3%**	6%	3%	1%	3%	3%
Honest, straightforward	**3%**	7%	2%	2%	3%	4%
I like him	**5%**	9%	5%	2%	4%	5%
Other positive qualities	**2%**	5%	2%	0%	2%	2%
Florida, senator	**2%**	2%	3%	1%	3%	1%
Immigration	**2%**	3%	1%	1%	2%	1%
Latino heritage	**4%**	4%	4%	2%	4%	3%
Young	**4%**	6%	4%	2%	5%	2%
Party, ideology	**4%**	4%	5%	3%	4%	4%
Policy positions	**1%**	2%	1%	2%	2%	1%
Presidential candidate	**2%**	3%	1%	2%	1%	2%
Dishonest, opportunist	**4%**	1%	6%	4%	4%	4%
Not smart	**1%**	0%	1%	1%	1%	0%
I dislike him	**4%**	1%	2%	8%	3%	4%
Other negative qualities	**2%**	0%	3%	3%	3%	2%
Other	**7%**	4%	9%	7%	9%	5%
No response	**48%**	40%	46%	56%	41%	55%

9. What is the first word or phrase that comes to mind when you think of Jeb Bush?

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER	
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female
Competent, capable	**1%**	0%	2%	0%	1%	1%
Intelligent, smart	**2%**	3%	2%	2%	3%	2%
Fair, honest	**3%**	6%	3%	1%	3%	3%
Consistent, dependable	**1%**	2%	0%	0%	1%	1%
Experienced	**1%**	2%	0%	0%	0%	1%
I like him	**8%**	15%	7%	5%	8%	8%
Other positive qualities	**3%**	5%	2%	1%	4%	1%
Florida, governor	**6%**	5%	7%	6%	7%	5%
Bush family	**23%**	20%	23%	25%	22%	24%
2000 Election	**1%**	0%	1%	1%	0%	1%
Party, ideology	**4%**	7%	4%	3%	5%	3%
Policy positions	**1%**	0%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Presidential candidate	**4%**	8%	2%	4%	5%	3%
Dishonest, corrupt	**5%**	3%	6%	5%	6%	4%
Not smart	**2%**	1%	2%	2%	2%	2%
I dislike him	**5%**	2%	5%	9%	5%	5%
Other negative qualities	**3%**	3%	3%	3%	2%	3%
Other	**9%**	6%	11%	9%	9%	8%
No response	**25%**	17%	24%	29%	23%	26%

10. What is the first word or phrase that comes to mind when you think of Joe Biden?

	Registered Voters	PARTY ID			GENDER	
		Rep	Ind	Dem	Male	Female
Intelligent, smart	**2%**	0%	1%	4%	2%	1%
Fair, honest	**2%**	0%	2%	4%	1%	3%
Experienced	**2%**	0%	2%	2%	3%	1%
Funny	**4%**	1%	3%	6%	3%	4%
I like him	**10%**	4%	7%	19%	8%	12%
Other positive qualities	**2%**	0%	2%	5%	1%	3%
Vice President	**9%**	9%	7%	11%	7%	10%
Age, old	**3%**	2%	2%	3%	4%	1%
Party, ideology	**3%**	3%	4%	1%	5%	1%
Policy positions	**1%**	1%	0%	1%	0%	1%
Presidential candidate	**4%**	3%	3%	5%	4%	4%
Dishonest, corrupt	**4%**	7%	6%	1%	6%	3%
Not smart	**9%**	18%	11%	2%	11%	8%
Not taken seriously, crazy, blowhard	**8%**	9%	10%	4%	7%	8%
Ineffective, weak	**4%**	5%	5%	1%	3%	4%
I dislike him	**7%**	15%	5%	4%	6%	7%
Other negative qualities	**3%**	6%	2%	2%	4%	2%
Other	**9%**	7%	10%	9%	9%	9%
No response	**18%**	10%	20%	18%	16%	19%

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