

INTRODUCTION: 1:44 min. Music: Jahzzar, Solitude

Believer: David Axelrod's Improbable Journey

By Elman + Perez-Trujillo + Skye + Zummar

David Axelrod (b. 1955) was born and raised in New York City, graduated from the University of Chicago, was a reporter for the *Chicago Tribune*, became a political operative and TV analyst, wrote a wonderful *New York Times* bestselling memoir titled, “Believer: My Forty Years in Politics,” and along the way became a rabid Chicago Cubs fan (2016 is a good year for that).

Of course, Axelrod is best known as the Chief Strategist for Barack Obama’s presidential campaigns. Electing the first black President of the United States is no small feat, but Axelrod also had a hand in electing Deval Patrick, the first black Governor of Massachusetts. The common elements between Obama and Patrick are that they are both highly gifted orators who inspire people with their life stories, their intellect, their world-class education when the deck was stacked against them, and their integrity. Full disclosure, I had the good fortune to host Deval Patrick’s first fundraiser on Cape Cod and volunteer on his advisory committee for eight years, and volunteer on the New England Steering Committee for Obama for eight years. So their messages got through to me.

After Obama’s election, Axelrod was appointed as Senior Advisor to the President. Axelrod left the White House position in early 2011 and became the Senior Strategist for Obama’s successful re-election campaign in 2012. He currently serves as the director of the non-partisan Institute of Politics at the University of Chicago, is a Senior Political Commentator for CNN, and writes for *The New Yorker* magazine.

Another trait shared between President Obama and Governor Patrick is that they are both excellent writers. And so is David Axelrod. My wife and I listened to Axelrod read his memoir on a three-day drive from the tip of Cape Cod to Miami Beach. Throughout the book, Axelrod’s humanity and intelligence shine through.

We caught up with David Axelrod at the Miami Book Fair where he was presenting his memoir. The videos below are organized by topic and run between 30 seconds and 3 minutes. Click on any video. You must be connected to the Internet to view the videos.

INSIGHT & INSPIRATION:
1:10 min.



Describe the experience of writing your memoir.

CRITICAL THINKING:
1:39 min.



Who did you show the memoir to while you were writing it?

CREATES A UNIQUE PERSONAL BRAND: 0:34 sec.



What was it like to make an audio recording of your memoir?

SELF-CONFIDENCE
1:25 min.



I don't remember anything negative about the President in th...

EMPATHY:
1:55 min.



How did your relationship with Obama change once he was e...

STRONG DRIVE FOR ACHIEVEMENT: 2:44 min



What did you learn in college that impacted your career?

DEVELOP A VOICE:
2:19 min.



I was deeply involved in Deval Patrick's campaign for Govern...

CRITICAL THINKING:
0:56 sec.



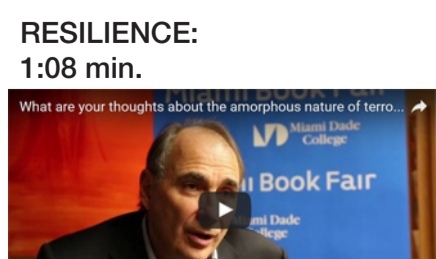
When I met candidate Obama for the first time I said, "I'm goi...

OPEN TO CHANGE:
1:51 min.



Some people say that President Obama manages like a lawyer...

RESILIENCE:
1:08 min.



What are your thoughts about the amorphous nature of terror...