

## **Ivanka Trump Has A Lot to Learn**

**CNN**

**By Jill Filipovic**

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Ivanka Trump made an interesting statement to "[Fox and Friends](#)" in an interview that aired Monday: She tries "to stay out of politics."

It's a strange thing, for a woman whose current job title is "adviser to the President of the United States."

To be sure, Ivanka Trump must have felt that she was in a safe space to make such a surprising statement. "Fox and Friends" is, at this point, basically state propaganda. And Ainsley Earhardt, the "Fox and Friends" anchor who conducted the interview, did indeed toss Trump a series of softballs, interjecting a few times to voice her own support for Trump's father.

But Trump couldn't even answer the easy questions, including when Earhardt asked where she and her father disagree. Instead of listing actual issues where that might be the case-- reproductive rights, perhaps, or LGBT rights, or refugee policy or climate change -- Trump offered a series of platitudes about how her father listens to different opinions and that it's normal for children to disagree with their parents.

"One of the things I think that in this country we don't have enough of is dialogue," Trump said. "And substantive dialogue, where people who have different opinions can speak about them freely and candidly."

She's correct. And yet when handed the opportunity, she talked in general about her support for such impossible-to-oppose issues as the need for workforce development, support for families, veterans, her concern about the opioid crisis -- but mainly about her support for her father. There was not a single issue she addressed substantively.

Instead, she said, "I don't profess to be a political savant. So I leave the politics to other people and really lean into the issues I care deeply about."

That's a fine position if she were still simply a business owner or real estate tycoon or an average American with a few issues that really motivate her but generally couldn't care less about what happens in Washington. But it's not a fine position for someone who works in the White House. It's insulting -- to the American people, to the office of the presidency, to the entire concept of public service.

Those who are advising the President should be political savants; they should know what they're doing, and they should have experience. The presidency is not just about power, and advisers to

the President -- whether that President is Republican or Democratic -- should not be motivated primarily by pet projects, and (in some cases) proximity to power and the potential for personal gain.

Advisers should want to serve not only because it is a great honor, but because they are highly qualified to offer their insight and expertise, built on experience, study and careerlong contemplation.

If that's not Ivanka Trump -- and that is not Ivanka Trump -- that's OK, she doesn't have to do it. The vast majority of Americans aren't qualified to advise the President, and that includes plenty of smart, talented people whose best qualities may make them great business owners or teachers or mechanics or writers or lawyers, but who are not fit to work in the White House.

Trump, who has spent most of her career working in the family business, can simultaneously be a bright young woman and also ridiculously unqualified for the role she now occupies (ditto for her husband, to whom the job of White House Innovations Director came only as a result of nepotism).

It is perfectly Trumpian, though, to see everything through the lens of power, influence and "winning" rather than qualification and service. What does Ivanka Trump offer? Not political expertise or professional experience, but a willingness to "lean into the issues" she cares about, which are themselves vague -- categories like "families" and "veterans."

Trump did get her father to include some [relatively meager paid family leave](#) in his proposed budget, but even that reflected her self-admitted lack of political savvy and focus on one issue while remaining ignorant on the bigger picture.

The budget as a whole is [one of the most anti-woman in years](#), cutting funding for women's health care at home and aid to needy women abroad, not to mention programs that help support poor pregnant women and low-income mothers. It's a disaster for women, and a few weeks of paid leave don't counterbalance the budget's broad potential damage.

It's fine for Ivanka Trump to stay out of politics -- and if the budget fiasco is any indication, perhaps she should. But that, by definition, means she should stay out of the Trump administration.

Source: [CNN.com](#)