was already seen as his worthy successor. He is known to have persecuted many intellectuals during Mao's Anti-Rightist Campaign of 1957 but later ordered far-reaching reviews of the cases of hundreds of thousands of intellectuals, students and professionals who had been sent into internal exile in impoverished rural areas after 1957. The following few years shaped Deng for when he would eventually become the leader of China. He witnessed Mao's massive Great Leap Forward fiasco first hand and learned how not to go about economic growth. Nearly 30 million people starved due to Mao's vastly flawed plan and Deng soon became the object of his hostility. Fearing that he was losing power, Mao took out his frustrations on Deng who he thought was lining up a coup. In the cultural revolution of 1966 Deng was purged for the second time. Most embarrassingly he was sent to a remote tractor factory where he did menial labour for the second time in his life. His political career should rightly have ended.

In 1973 he was called back from the dead by his good friend Zhou Enlai, with Enlai's health failing he was thought to have been lined up as his replacement. Things did not go completely according to plan as after Enlai died, as Deng was purged one last time by a dying Mao. His political comeback gathered momentum and by late 1978 he was essentially the leader of China. He soon set about changing the lives of ordinary Chinese men and women with his models for economic change. In the process he set China on the fast track to economic superstardom.

Deng was the man who introduced new economic dynamism with his striking phrase that it did not matter whether a cat was black or white as long as it could catch mice. The goals of Deng's reforms were summed up by 'the Four Modernisations', those of agriculture, industry, science and technology and the military. The strategy for achieving these aims of becoming a modern, industrial nation was the cleverly worded "socialist market economy". While not everyone supported him at first the sheer success of his policies made them undeniable. By changing the way peasants live, Deng recast China, and in many ways altered the world we live in. He did this through the simple method of giving the land Mao had initially confiscated from the landlord class back to the peasants. Through the contract responsibility system, farmers were free to grow any crops they wished, so long as they delivered a specified amount of staple crops to the central government. Roughly 200 million Chinese escaped destitution, one could say he was the greatest poverty alleviator ever.

While agricultural reform was how he changed China from within, industrial reforms were how he changed the world. In industrial reforms Deng started creating special economic zones in China's coastal provinces where tax subsidies attracted Hong Kong's manufacturing tycoons. The economic zones ignited an export explosion that continues today, with China dominating the world market in toys, shoes and textiles.



He led a chequered life, having been purged twice by the communist party and eventually came back as China's paramount leader.

Deng's contribution to China was not merely economic opening up, but he was also an astute politician. He arranged for the return of Macau and for the case of Hong Kong he proposed the unique "one country, two systems" plan.

Sadly though Deng is last remembered for his hand in the crackdown of the Tiananmen Square Protests. The violent suppression of the Tiananmen Square protest caused extensive worldwide criticism of the Chinese government. Deng Xiaoping and Li Peng are generally blamed for the events. Critics accused Deng of suppressing any signs of political freedom that would undermine the direction of his economic reforms. Deng's involvement in the events proved that he still possessed certain dictatorial powers. This is usually where his legacy turns murky. To many he is the great reformer, while to others he was just another dictatorial ruler. Truth be told he was little bit of both, for while he may have learned from Mao's mistakes he ruled in the same authoritative manner.