

CHARACTERISTICS OF THE GREAT MANAGER

Grid Exercise

The grid below has 4 blocks, each combining the 2 elements of the characteristics on the top and left of the grid. For example, Block A is Smart & Industrious; Block B is Dumb & Industrious, etc.

Place an X in the block that you think has the characteristics of the great manager.

	Smart	Dumb
Industrious	A	B
Lazy	C	D

Discussion

Most people put their X in block A because they believe that a great manager needs to be both smart and industrious.

Experience has shown that this is not usually so.

The best combination is actually Block C, smart and lazy.

The Block C manager has the smarts to know what needs to be done, at what level, by when and does not waste his or her time, or the time of subordinates, with unnecessary, low yield, or trivial work. This does not preclude having very high standards when they are necessary, but it does mean the manager will have the ability to prioritize correctly. It means in combat the leader focuses on the effective fighting capability of the troops not their ability to march in formation.

The Block A manager will often drive him or herself to do more than needs to be done, on unnecessary or trivial work, because they believe hard work is its own reward. These managers tend to wear themselves and their people out unnecessarily on low yield projects and standards.

You have little to fear from the Block D manager. He or she will do little, and is capable of little, and will likely be removed from his or her position in time as their limitations become obvious.

The truly dangerous manager is the Block B manager. The combination of lack of intelligence or wisdom, with a desire to work hard, and work subordinates hard, can destroy an organization. Unnecessary or wrong projects fill the worklist and produce marginally useful or bad results.