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*“The really valuable lessons to be learned from Ike come from an earlier part of his career.”*

STRATEGIES, IDEAS AND TIPS FOR MANAGING YOURSELF AND OTHERS

## Managing Your People — Ike Style

By Geoff Loftus, author

When most people think of Dwight D. “Ike” Eisenhower, they think of the confident general, the man who commanded Allied forces on D-Day and beat the Nazis. Or they think of the genial, grandfatherly figure who occupied the White House for eight years. Forget that. The really valuable lessons to be learned from Ike come from an earlier part of his career.

In June 1942, Ike arrived in London with the task of putting together an Allied force that would be capable of launching the largest amphibious assault ever attempted — a massive invasion (code name: Overlord) to hit the Normandy beaches approximately a year after Ike took the job. An operation that would go against an opponent with complete control of the territory, a track record of success, short supply lines and a powerful industrial base supporting it. It was bad enough that as of June 1942, the force Ike was supposed to invade with didn’t actually exist, but he was supposed to create the organization, train the men, plan the invasion and accomplish everything within 12 months. And then things became much worse: A month after he arrived in London, Ike was informed by his bosses (President Franklin Delano Roosevelt and Prime Minister Winston Churchill) that he was to invade North Africa within months (with the same non-existent force that was supposed to go into France) and he was still expected to deliver on the Normandy invasion inside of a year.

Talk about having to manage when the going gets tough. Ike’s handling of those turbulent times are a great guide for today’s managers as they haul their companies out of the recession.

After being assigned the North Africa mission (code named: Torch), Ike quickly pulled himself together. His bosses’ vision for Torch required an extraordinarily short timeline — Ike was expected to launch the assault by September 1942. Torch was a smaller-scale project than Overlord, but still the largest of its kind in world history. It would call for a new process because much of the work force would be coming directly across the Atlantic, reporting at the moment the project kicked off.

The 12-month timeline for the Normandy invasion was not being extended. While Ike was running Torch, he was also expected to continue planning the launch of Overlord. The pressure on Eisenhower had increased gigantically. He was now in charge of two projects whose scale exceeded anything ever done, with shortened deadlines and utilizing a process never attempted before. But that’s what Roosevelt and Churchill had ordered. Ike would succeed — or else.

Almost immediately after the decision to go into Africa, Eisenhower’s British allies pushed for a larger operation (almost doubling the manpower involved). Talk about mission creep; instead of taking over French North Africa, the British wanted Torch to clear their German competition completely out of Africa, which meant a clean sweep from the Atlantic coast in the west to Egypt in the east. The British proposals were quickly agreed to by Ike’s superiors. Michael Korda wrote in *Ike: An American Hero* (Harper Perennial): “Nobody else in the U.S. armed forces ... had a command anything like as ambitious and far-reaching as this.” Stephen Ambrose put it a little more simply in *The Supreme Commander* (University Press of Mississippi): “This increase in scope made Eisenhower’s responsibilities far too broad for one man to handle.” Ike’s solution was simple — delegate.

Eisenhower appointed Major Gen. Russell P. Hartle as his deputy commander for Europe (Overlord) and Major Gen. Mark W. Clark as his deputy for Africa (Torch). Each man assumed primary responsibility for planning

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***“If there are existing team or department structures in your organization that can do what you need, use them. For that matter, see if you can use the team or department itself to accomplish your goals.”***

## **Managing Your People — Ike Style**

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in his area. Ike trusted them completely and both moved their projects forward.

It's easy to say that all Ike had to do was delegate, but remember the pressure under which he did so. The cost of failure was an increased death toll. Once he assessed his responsibilities, he realized he could not meet them on his own and delegated, which required an astounding lack of ego on Ike's part. Many of the senior commanders in the American and British military had greater seniority in service, higher rank and more combat experience than Eisenhower. Clark achieved the rank of major general before Ike did. George Patton, who would become a front-line executive for Torch (and for later operations in Sicily and France) was older, had more time in the service and, until 1942, had a higher rank than Eisenhower. But, as Korda wrote, “Ike was the least rank-conscious of generals. This made his task easier.”

Ike didn't allow himself to be overwhelmed by another man's record of success, and he trusted that the men on his team were as dedicated to D-Day as he was, that they would put aside their own egos and get to the job at hand. For the most part, Ike's approach worked quite well and he followed it throughout the war.

Along with assembling a high-level team, Ike had to build the staff for Allied Force Headquarters. Ike decided to use the American military staff system with staff sections designated as G-1 (Personnel), G-2 (Intelligence), G-3 (Operations and Training), G-4 (Logistics) and G-5 (Civil Affairs). Because Ike was convinced that the only way to succeed was through an Allied organization, he balanced the staff, making sure that each section head was a different nationality than that section's deputy.

Eisenhower had to move quickly and name the executives who would be leading the front-line work forces. This was the equivalent of appointing regional managers to run your business — within their regions, each executive has a great deal of power and autonomy, and each man or woman can make or break your success in that region.

Ike picked Patton to lead the American forces. Sir Kenneth A. N. Anderson would head up the British forces. Ike's naval and air force executives continued the Allied balance. The leader of the naval forces was Sir Andrew B. Cunningham, while the air forces were split east and west, with the eastern “regional director” being British Sir William L. Welsh and the western director being American James H. Doolittle, winner of the

Medal of Honor for planning and leading the daring air raid on Tokyo in April 1942.

### **Lessons From Ike**

There are four lessons to be learned from Ike's management style as he created the organization that would succeed with both Torch and Overlord:

**1. Don't reinvent the wheel.** The U.S. Army's staff system had been effective for a long time, and Ike knew how to make it work. If there are existing team or department structures in your organization that can do what you need, use them. For that matter, see if you can use the team or department itself to accomplish your goals.

**2. Match work force to mission.** Ike was convinced that only a truly allied force could succeed at displacing the German opponent. His organization reflected that from the top-down. Assess what you must have in terms of work force, and go recruit and train what you need. If you're in sales, be sure you have a large enough, capable enough sales force. If you build and/or maintain things, be sure your people can do that. If you do both, be sure your work force is properly balanced to accomplish both.

**3. Delegate.** Micro-management does not work. No matter how much you may want to believe that you are the only person who can do the job — you aren't. Find people you trust, communicate directly and clearly to them, make sure they know they have your full support and let them do the job.

**4. Keep your ego out of it.** Sure, it's a cliché, but if you expect to lead a team, you need to be a team player yourself. If you model that kind of behavior, your teammates will follow your lead. Ike not only modeled team behavior, he demonstrated his concern for his team. On the eve of D-Day, Ike was visiting the troops about to go into battle. One of the soldiers shouted to him, “Now, quit worrying, General, we'll take care of this thing for you.”

As history shows, Ike's soldiers did, in fact, “take care of this thing” in North Africa and Normandy. ■

### **ABOUT THE AUTHOR**

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*“Whatever the cause, one thing is certain: back injuries are expensive.”*

## What Are You Doing To Promote Back Safety?

Moving forklifts, high traffic, heavy lifting and temperature problems are among the many hazards warehouse workers face every day. However, as nearly every occupational safety and health professional would agree, the biggest threat facing warehouse workers and others involved in materials handling is back injury. Transporting heavy loads, even with the help of carts and dollies, can and will take a toll on the back, unless proper preventive steps are taken.

There are a lot of obstacles to keeping your workers injury-free. For example, many workers simply may not know how to lift and carry loads safely. Others may know, but, in their haste to get the job done, take shortcuts. Still others seem to have some kind of Superman complex and believe that they can beat the odds of back injury simply because they are strong enough to withstand the risk.

Whatever the cause, one thing is certain: back injuries are expensive. For the person who is injured, it could mean time away from the job and the accompanying loss of income. In some cases, it may mean medical attention or even surgery. Some back injuries can even be permanently disabling.

Back injuries are not cheap for employers, either. Workers' compensation costs associated with back injuries have gone through the roof. Temporarily losing workers to injury may mean hiring temporary replacements. This means additional time and training costs. Any way you look at it, back injuries are costly.

To avoid at least some of these costs, consider putting together a training program. Remind your workers how to lift safely and why it is so important to follow proper lifting procedures. Here are some points to cover:

**1. Tell your workers to slow down.** There are ways to allow your workers to slow down that will not hurt overall productivity. While keeping deadlines, quotas and other limitations in mind, avoid forcing your employees to rush. Rushing leads to shortcuts, which can lead to injuries.

**2. Establish a stretch-and-rest program.** Encourage employees to stretch before each shift. You may even consider putting together formal stretching sessions. This will help ensure that your employees' muscles are warmed up in preparation for work. Slowly warming up the muscles puts less strain on them than immediately putting them into high gear.

Keep in mind, however, that it is just as important to

allow and even encourage your workers to rest their muscles and joints while on breaks. Recuperation time is an important component of a solid ergonomics program. Constant use of the same set of muscles or joints can lead to injury.

**3. Teach proper lifting techniques.** There will always be occasions when your employees will have to lift something. When they do, they need to know how to do it the right way. Teach them what this means and make sure they follow through. If you see someone lifting in an unsafe manner, remind him or her to do it the safe way.

Remind your employees, too, that lifting may not be necessary. Provide them with carts, hand trucks and dollies as alternatives to carrying heavy loads, but remember, there are safety procedures for using these tools, too. Make sure your workers are aware of them and make it part of your back safety training effort. ■

## How One Supervisor Stamped Out Racial Epithets

What can supervisors do to stamp out racial discrimination? Consider the following example of a supervisor at an Alabama veterinary supply company.

An African-American employee complained that the use of a racial epithet by a co-worker created a racially hostile environment. The supervisor immediately took corrective action when he learned about the co-worker's comment. He discussed the situation with the co-worker and interviewed another employee who had overheard the remark.

The employee/victim participated in the disciplinary decision and agreed to the type and degree of discipline handed out. The offending co-worker was required to formally apologize to the employee and promise not to make any more racially derogatory statements. In addition, he received an oral reprimand and a written warning for his personnel file. He was plainly told that a second incident of this type would result in termination.

Not surprisingly, the co-worker promptly eliminated all racially offensive words from his workplace vocabulary. Even the African-American employee, who later sued for racial bias, could find no fault in the supervisor's disciplinary actions.

You must remember that racial discrimination and harassment are against the law. If you know that a worker is being harassed or discriminated against, you must put a stop to it immediately. ■

*“High-level and middle managers don’t always have the time or willingness to teach their staffs about basic work values that can energize lackluster employees.”*

## Advice For Raising Employee Values

Ambitious supervisors in many companies are creating their own mantras to rouse the spirits and values of their employees.

According to Lynn Schumacher, a workplace consultant, “High-level and middle managers don’t always have the time or willingness to teach their staffs about basic work values that can energize lackluster employees. The task has fallen mostly in the laps of front-line supervisors.”

Schumacher adds that she is impressed by the growing number of supervisors who “go out of their way to rally employees over the solid principles that add ethical value to their teams.”

### Value-Raising Objectives

Based on her observations over the past few years, Schumacher provides the following summary of value-raising objectives that several supervisors have imparted to their workers, either through written or verbal form:

- **Work with integrity.** Show respect for one another and to outside customers when interacting with them.
- **Make cooperation a working tool.** Learn to ask for help and share advice when your team faces difficult challenges.
- **Be willing to learn, change and improve.** Don’t be afraid to adopt new methods that break the mold of how certain jobs are normally carried out. Also strive to be smarter and faster in what you do.
- **Understand your importance in the company.** Take a good, hard look at how both the community and customers benefit from your work.
- **Focus on results.** Embrace failure as a benchmark for improvement and a catalyst for positive discussion.
- **Give recognition to each other.** Praise and rewards don’t always have to originate from supervisors and managers. If you see a co-worker going above and beyond, be sure to recognize him or her by saying thanks.
- **Offer ideas.** Creative input isn’t restricted only to those who have the authority to implement change. Your ideas, suggestions and opinions mean a lot to the company. Speak up and share your ideas. ■

## Five Tips To Cut Your Workers’ Comp Costs

Work-related injuries can affect your bottom line, and damage morale and productivity. Use these tips to help prevent injuries in your workplace:

**1. Prevent cumulative trauma injuries.** Repetitive stress injuries, such as low back pain and carpal tunnel syndrome, are some of the fastest growing on-the-job injuries today. Cumulative injuries have symptoms like numbness, loss of strength and discomfort. How can you prevent them? Watch your workers for the following hazards:

✓ **Hands and wrists.** If your employees are performing work that requires the wrists to be bent, they are at risk for carpal tunnel syndrome. Ask them to hold their wrists straight while doing the work. You can also change work positions and tools.

✓ **Elbows.** Stressful positions of the elbow include rotation of the forearm when the wrist is bent, and leaning on the elbows, especially when the surface is hard. Ergonomic surface padding and better posture can help ease stress on elbows.

✓ **Lower back.** A lot of low back pain is caused by twisting while lifting instead of keeping the back straight and moving the feet. Other solutions to lower back problems include better posture, ergonomic chairs and brief breaks during which workers should stretch and relax.

**2. Encourage workers to ask for help when they need it.** Tell employees not to be too proud or too shy to say, “Could you give me a hand?” After all, they would help a fellow worker who needed it. Remind them that if they overdo it and get hurt, they will pay the price.

**3. Stress the importance of teamwork.** Cooperation means taking the time to show someone the safe way to do the job. It’s about pointing something out that you don’t think is safe and asking someone if he or she knows the right procedure in a given situation.

**4. Eliminate clutter.** Make sure workers put away tools, clean up spills and report hazards.

**5. Make sure tools, equipment and property are in good shape.** Inspect for protruding nails, sharp corners, open cabinet drawers and stray electrical wires. If equipment is damaged, make sure employees report it. Follow up to make sure the equipment has been fixed before using it again. ■

***“Do a group brainstorm, drawing on the collective knowledge and experience of the team, to come up with every possible solution to a problem — even the most off-the-wall idea may have some merit.”***

## **Job Sharing: A Key To Productivity**

If there's one thing you need to know before implementing job sharing, it's how to document. In job sharing, two or more people share one job. Whether this means they'll share one desk, one computer, one telephone or one spot at a workstation, you need to keep track of their time.

Instruct the workers to put in writing what they have accomplished during their workdays. What has been left undone? What takes priority? Who needs what?

Although manufacturing environments seem less suitable to job sharing than offices, the documentation aspect is actually much easier. Each worker in a factory job-share does essentially the same job, sitting at the same workstation, so there is less writing and communication involved. The main issue is for the supervisor to make sure the workers get along with each other.

In an office, however, it's important for the supervisor to know how each job-share worker is handling his or her respective workload. It entails a little more work for the supervisor, but the effort pays off in satisfied employees.

Job sharing can also provide an added bonus. Think about this: When managed efficiently, two part-time workers can turn in a total of 50 hours a week, effectively making a 40-hour-a-week job much more productive. ■

## **How To Build A Fast Consensus**

“Consensus is fast and easy when you have nothing to hide and don't fear losing a fight,” says Christopher Avery, author of *Teamwork Is An Individual Skill: Getting Your Work Done When Sharing Responsibility*, (Berrett-Koehler Publishers, Inc.). “Some people don't like to use consensus as a decision-making model because it takes too much time. They believe that people tend to polarize on the issues or threaten to use veto power when they don't achieve their individual purposes.”

Avery, president of Partnerwerks, a consulting firm that helps people thrive in team environments, argues that it is possible to short-circuit this kind of behavior

and use consensus to arrive at decisions quickly. Below, he offers five suggestions for reaching a fast consensus in your organization:

**1. Consider more alternatives.** “Generating lots of alternatives actually clarifies decision-making,” says Avery. “Trying to analyze only two or three alternatives can have the effect of focusing the team on making the ‘right decision.’ All too often, the choices can appear to be between polar opposites resulting in paralysis instead of creative thought.

“Do a group brainstorm, drawing on the collective knowledge and experience of the team, to come up with every possible solution to a problem — even the most off-the-wall idea may have some merit. When you think you've thought of all possible ideas, think again. You can always come up with more alternatives.”

**2. Involve more people with different points of view.** By bringing more people with different perspectives into the room to engage in brainstorming, you can come up with a wider range of solutions to an issue or problem. “When more views are represented, more angles are likely to be covered,” says Avery. “In addition, you can avoid getting into the politics of one person promoting his or her alternative at the expense of all other ideas.”

**3. Communicate and integrate with other parts of the organization.** “Fast-moving teams invite other departments to participate in their planning,” says Avery. “Coordinate with other departments in real time, so team members don't have to spend time playing catch-up with what's going on. As one department moves ahead, it is the team's responsibility to keep other departments informed of its progress.”

**4. Draw on the wisdom of experienced workers.** Use the talent and experience in your organization. Check your strategies with those who have been with the company for a significant period of time or who have done similar work in other companies. Create mentoring relationships with senior leaders. “Their experience, intuition and situational knowledge can help the team make smart choices,” observes Avery.

**5. Establish the importance of collective action.** “To fast teams, getting a result and learning from it together is more important than being right,” says Avery. “Team members have to be in agreement that it is better to move forward and do something and see how it works than it is to do nothing. However, fast teams also have to make sure that everyone on the team, especially the minority opinion, has a chance to be heard.” ■

*“Psychologists say not all procrastination is bad. Some decisions need a little seasoning, so don’t rush just to get them made.”*

## Put A Stop To Procrastination

Nobody knows exactly why some people procrastinate, but the usual suspects are low self-esteem, fear of failure, and even fear of success.

Yet, some people actually enjoy procrastinating. They seem to like the pressure of having to get something done at the last possible minute. That’s bad news for supervisors because the final results may not be as good.

Procrastinators have tools to help them with the job. They may make endless to-do lists, drink lots of caffeinated coffee or soda, and spend a great deal of time “clearing the decks” for the work at hand. These are worthwhile tasks, but they don’t get the job done.

The habit of late work can ruin your reputation at work, especially with your employees. If you are guilty of frequent procrastination, here are a few tactics that could help:

- Put yourself on a schedule. Allotting time for specific projects can minimize problems.
- Break big tasks into smaller ones. Tackle large jobs one step at a time.
- Make a really useful list. Start at the bottom (where the tasks you least look forward to completing are usually found).
- Meet with your employees once a week to discuss urgent items and to plan ahead.

Psychologists say not all procrastination is bad. Some decisions need a little seasoning, so don’t rush just to get them made. However, if you find yourself procrastinating more and more frequently, get the situation under control before work starts to suffer. ■

## Seven Signs Of A Disgruntled Employee

“Unhappy workers exhibit signs that disclose their feelings,” says Val J. Arnold, senior vice president of Personnel Decisions International, a global management and human resources and consulting firm. “By knowing the signs, managers can work with them to address problems early on.”

Arnold suggests looking for the following signs:

- ✓ **Won’t go the extra mile.** Unlike content employees, unhappy workers are not eager to take on new challenges that will expand their work skills.
- ✓ **Focusing on problems.** Unhappy workers typically find something to complain about — such as their boss, salary, or company policies — instead of focusing on the positive aspects of the job.
- ✓ **No comment.** While some complain, other unhappy workers withdraw or become apathetic. They rarely have opinions and tend to adopt a defeatist “who cares” attitude.
- ✓ **Watching the clock.** They spend as little time as possible on the job, to the point of coming in late and leaving early. In addition, they may not attend office social functions or develop friendships with co-workers.
- ✓ **Disengaged.** Unhappy workers are detached and lack enthusiasm for their jobs.
- ✓ **Sick and tired.** A high rate of absenteeism often prevails among unhappy workers. At work, they may seem tired or complain about not feeling well.
- ✓ **Lack of ownership.** These workers may see their jobs as a means to a paycheck, and nothing more. They aren’t really involved in doing the best possible job. ■

## The Meaning Of Success

In their book, *Winning* (Collins), Jack and Suzy Welch say that being a leader changes everything. Before becoming a leader, success was all about you and your contributions.

The meaning of success changes after you become a leader. Now success becomes all about growing others. It’s about making people who work for you look smarter, bigger and bolder. It’s about how you nurture and support your team and how you help team members increase their self-confidence.

You will get your recognition from above, but only in as much as your team wins. In other words, your success as a leader will come from the reflected glory of your team. It’s a difficult transition. ■



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