

Will Your Employee Make a Great Manager?

By Eric Rudolf

Anyone who works for (or with) a great manager knows there is something different about the person they report to. But rarely is it easy to identify the exact traits which separate a great manager from all of the bad ones who have made our jobs so difficult. Some may describe a great manager as someone who has a likeable personality, excellent communication skills, or an intimate knowledge of the business. But are these individual traits really what make the difference? Or is there an entire package of skills and aptitudes that great managers have and below average managers do not? And when it comes time to promote one of your loyal employees to a management role, how do you know they are ready to take the next step?

Following is a list of skills, characteristics and personality traits that directly affect an employee's ability to be promoted into a management position at a small company. If you are currently evaluating an internal candidate for promotion into a manager spot, complete this assessment as part of your evaluation process. Note that the key is not to ensure the employee possesses all of these traits, but rather that the employee possesses an **acceptable combination** of them.

To increase the value of the tool itself, you might consider adding a **Level of Importance** column for each trait, using ratings like Not Relevant, Important and Mandatory depending upon your hiring objectives. This will allow you to identify the traits which are most important to your decision. If you are considering one or more internal candidates for the same promotion, you may also wish to add an **Employee Rating** column, and assign the candidates a rating from 1 to 5 for each Trait, so you may objectively compare them side-by-side.

And finally, although many great managers develop their skills over time, the fact remains some people will NEVER be comfortable with things like writing or negotiation or analytics, and others will never be able to separate their work lives from their personal ones. Therefore, it is important during this process to try and understand what your employees **can** do, what they **cannot** do, and what their **limitations** are.

If you have any questions, comments or suggestions relating to this tool, please feel free to contact me directly at eric@thesmallcompanyblog.com.

ASSESSMENT TOOL: The 17 Traits of a Promotable Employee

Following is a list of skills, characteristics and personality traits that directly affect an employee's ability to be promoted into a management position at a small company. If you are currently evaluating an internal candidate for promotion into a manager spot, complete this assessment as part of your evaluation process. To increase the value of the tool itself, add a **Level of Importance** column for each trait and an **Employee Rating** column, as described in the Introduction.

Trait	Things to Consider
An Exceptional Level of Skill Communicating Verbally	Does this person sound credible when speaking with peers and customers? Do they represent the organization to others in the way you would like them to?
An Exceptional Level of Skill Communicating in Writing	Can this person be trusted with messaging? Are you confident enough in this person's writing ability to not review their work prior to publishing it?
A High Level of Comfort with Numbers and Statistics	Does this person review statistics and historical data without prompting from you? Do they make data-driven decisions whenever possible?
A High Level of Comfort with Negotiation	Can this person work with vendors and not be taken advantage of? Would they speak up if they needed more money or additional resources for a program?
The Ability to Manage Others Fairly and Effectively	Does this person have the ability to be a firm, yet even-handed leader of people? Would employees respect this person's approach?
The Desire to Always Do What is Best for the Organization	Will this person protect the company first, or a personal agenda? Can they prioritize work based on company benefit?
The Ability to Delegate	Will this person hang on to administrative tasks instead of pass them to others? Do they understand the value of a manager's time?
A Willingness to Stand Up for Themselves	Is this person a 'yes person?' Are they willing to defend an idea or line of thinking they believe is valid?
The Ability to Handle Confrontation and Criticism	Will this person remain calm when challenged? Can they make a point without appearing defensive?
The Ability to Put Personal Issues Aside	Does this person allow non work-related issues to affect performance and attitude? Can this person effectively work with people they do not like personally?

Copyright © 2009 THEsmallCOMPANYBLOG.com. All rights reserved.

This document may not be reproduced or distributed in any way without the express written permission of Eric Rudolf.
To inquire about use of this document, please send an email to eric@thesmallcompanyblog.com.

ASSESSMENT TOOL: The 17 Traits of a Promotable Employee

Page 2

Trait	Things to Consider
A Willingness to Remain Flexible	Does this person become upset when priorities are unexpectedly changed? Are they willing to put in extra hours on occasion and not complain?
The Ability to Navigate the Political Landscape	Is this person intuitive enough to understand all of the relationships within the company? Are they patient enough to wade through them when necessary?
A Willingness to Cover Your Back	Can this person act as your eyes and ears within the organization? Will they shield you from or make you aware of pending danger?
The Desire to Try New Things and Do Things Differently	Does this person have an entrepreneurial spirit? Can they expand upon your ideas and make them better?
The Tendency to NOT Ride the Emotional Roller Coaster	Does this person maintain an even temperament regardless of the situation? Are they predictable in their personality?
The Ability to Handle Pressure	Can this person remain calm and confident during a catastrophe? Will their entire department come to a grinding halt in the face of a looming deadline?
The Ability to Motivate Others	Will this person be able to maximize the efforts of his or her employees? Do they have the ability to communicate the company's goals in terms that will inspire?