

To Ray, who always knew I could

And

To "Peanut", who provided the motivation to finish one project before I started the next

EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

The stereotypical roles of women and men in engineering management remain what they were first seen to be with the Gilbreths in the 1920's: men focus on the mechanics while women tend to the human element. This study attempts to find out if the stereotype is justified.

In the 1980's articles were written to provide advice for managing the sole woman in the engineering department. In the 1990's, studies showed increases in the number of women in engineering, but did not offer much hope that the culture of project management would remain anything but masculine. As recently as 2005, women and men in business were still contrasted by their communication styles. Men were the assertive, logical, structured types while women, not specifically engineers, were cooperative, sensing, adaptable beings.

Until women in engineering management achieve critical mass they will continue to have to work within the dominant, masculine culture for effectiveness. This study, conducted in a civil engineering office with women present in numbers much higher than industry average, was a survey of gender specifics in both the manager and employee side of the relationship. The office provides the opportunity to study future demographics today.

With their presence increasing in number, the study found improved acceptance of women in engineering and management, but not universal and unconditional. Additionally, the study found women and men sticking mostly with their traditional gender roles, with some feminization of the men in engineering management. Like women, some men were looking for socialization and personal relationships at work. Though men, the most admired managers displayed empathy and communication skills found more commonly in women. A future study will have to address the possibility of women engineering managers at critical mass developing their own managerial styles as this study was conducted too early for the demographics to reveal any conclusions.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INTRODUCTION AND SIGNIFICANCE	1
From Literature	1
Topic Exploration	1
PROCEDURE AND METHODOLOGY	3
FINDINGS	5
Experience with Women Managers and their Differences	5
How do you Want to be Managed?	5
Experience with Bad Managers	6
Experience with Good/Inspirational Managers	6
Gender Preference for Manager.....	6
Desired Employee Attributes.....	7
Gender Preference for Employees	7
Word Association	8
Women Employees	8
Men Employees	8
Women Managers	9
Men Managers	9
SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS.....	10
REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY.....	11
APPENDIX A: Survey Administered.....	12
APPENDIX B: Survey Results.....	15
APPENDIX C: Word Association Summary	32
Characteristics of Women Employees	33
Characteristics of Men Employees	34
Characteristics of Women Managers	35
Characteristics of Men Managers	36

INTRODUCTION AND SIGNIFICANCE

Even going back to the 1920's and the father and mother of modern engineering management, Frank and Lillian Gilbreth, the natural gender roles of management were clear. Frank concentrated on efficiency in the "how to" technical element while Lillian worked on the human aspect of industrial management. After years of development and the rising presence of women engineers in the workplace, the stereotypical roles have not changed much.

From Literature

In the 1980's women engineers were beginning to progress beyond the point of being a workplace anomaly. An article in Research Management recognized that, "In competing for quality engineers, it will pay to have your people develop an awareness and skills necessary to manage a diverse work force."¹ The article conducted interviews and provided the reader with advice on managing the assumed lone woman in an engineering department. "One woman described her dilemma... 'I have to decide whether to speak up and lose my effectiveness with the group, or remain silent. I have to neuter myself to get along with the men in engineering.'" The fact that it needed to specify, "Calling female engineers 'girls'," as inappropriate behavior tells the tale of the times.

More recently, a March 2005 newsletter from the Institute for Management Excellence provided an overview of the gender-based differences in communication styles followed by general advice for women both working with and managing men, not specifically in engineering.

1. *Men talk to give information or report. Women talk to collect information or gain rapport.*
2. *Men talk about things (business, sports, food). Women talk about people.*
3. *Men focus on facts, reason and logic. Women focus on feelings, senses and meaning.*
4. *Men thrive on competing and achieving. Women thrive on harmony and relating.*
5. *Men "know" by analyzing and figuring out. Women "know" by intuiting.*
6. *Men are more assertive. Women are more cooperative.*
7. *Men seek intellectual understanding. Women are able to empathize.*
8. *Men are focused, specific, logical. Women are wholistic, organic and "wide-angle."*
9. *Men are comfortable with order, rules and structure. Women with fluidity.*
10. *Men want to think. Women want to feel.*²

Knowing how each communicates helps when one side isn't getting through to the other. The article admits, however, that due to the female's nature, she's usually the one in the management/employee relationship to bridge the gap. As this advice was for general business, and not specifically for engineers, it remains to be seen how women combine the thinking, analysis, and logic of engineering with their nature to nurture.

Topic Exploration

Throughout, it looks like manager roles by gender are well established. But the engineering manager has usually worked and learned the technical side of engineering to get to a supervisory position, both women and men. By nature, an engineering manager should be more focused on or at least more aware of the technical. Did the politically correct '90s and diversity training of the new millennium create male engineering managers with a more nurturing side? Has a more modern woman engineering manager developed a style that blends the technical management with the human element? After developing a technical background do women revert back to their more nurturing nature when they

achieve management status? Or have they lost that natural tendency after long focusing on the technical?

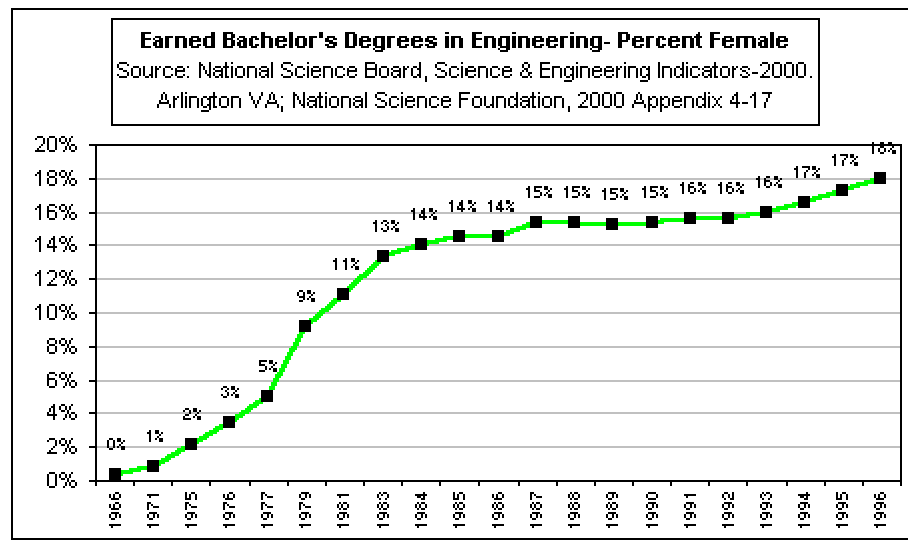
In spite of the early pioneer Lillian Gillbreth, women engineering managers have been playing in a man's world and for effectiveness, they've had to play by the men's rules. In any field, until women gain critical mass they have to operate, at least in part, the way men do. A PBS broadcast of a documentary dinner party discussion of world women leaders in 1999 explored that topic. At the dinner, feminist Betty Friedan expressed that critical mass can be thought of as achieving about 30% representation in any field.³

In spite of the low average presence in the work place, this study uses an office where women are almost present in critical mass. The women are mostly young and do not wield significant management power, but they are beginning to reach a point with some supervisory capacity. As women are on the brink of reaching critical mass in more of the industry, this office provides an opportunity to find out if women in significant numbers become comfortable enough to develop their own management styles. Management tendencies by gender are established, but does a woman engineering manager blend these when given a chance? Does managing change for a man when there is more than a token woman in his command?

Even as recently as the 1990's a British article didn't think so. "It is argued that, because the culture of project-based industries is inherently 'masculine' in orientation, a culture change will not necessarily occur merely as a result of an increase in the critical mass of women entering this environment." It painted a dreary picture for the possibility of a cultural change in the construction industry, one example of a project-based industry. "The culture is characterized by male domination, crisis, aggression and conflict, gallant behaviour and traditional attitudes. Students are socialized, educated about and initiated into the construction culture. The masculine culture is promoted actively and passively. Higher and further education provides places where 'would-be' project managers learn to behave and to identify with the dominant culture."⁴ In spite of being educated to prepare for such a culture, this study, a decade later, aims to see if that is still the case.

PROCEDURE AND METHODOLOGY

In industry, women represent about 9% of the technical workforce in a typical engineering office. Among new engineering graduates, the trend shown in the following table indicates women are catching up with men with bachelor's degrees. Since this degree represents the typical entry into the industry, the numbers should be showing up widespread in the workforce within the next 20 years. If women are expected to play a greater role in the engineering community, it would be timely to study an office and departments that reflects such proportions now.



This study was administered in a civil engineering office where about one-quarter of the technical staff of 75 is women. Broken down by department and excluding upper management that percentage gets as high as 43%. The office overall has a young workforce, which is why only one of the 16 managers is a woman in spite of overall high office percentages. The women in the office just have not reached that point in their careers yet. The first women to work their way up are just reaching project engineer status where they are beginning to be responsible for tasks and guiding younger engineers. Reflecting the trend of engineering graduates, most women engineers in this office are in their 20s and just beginning to represent real numbers of the office's PE licenses. As the men in the office have more of a pool of women to interact with, their observations can be useful, as well.

A survey (see Appendix A) was administered to the entire office by e-mail attachment giving the pool of respondents three weeks to reply. Reminders were sent at one week and one day remaining. Additionally, collection envelopes were posted prominently in all three break rooms with the deadline and survey purpose clearly marked. A total of 16 responses were returned anonymously.

It is expected that the survey will find progress in the acceptance of women in engineering and engineering management. Also, the best management characteristics by gender can be identified for adoption, or at least consideration, by the opposite gender. In truth, if women are educated for the dominant culture⁴, as the British study suggested, then they should already know the masculine management traits, but the office being studied provides an opportunity to identify feminine styles for the men to consider. Contrary to the British study, with women at or near critical mass it is expected that they are free to develop their own management styles, free of the boundaries of the dominant culture.

In an interview with a subject in the studied office, she related a project team experience that was immensely successful and a prime example of what could happen in an all-female team. The project team had a male project manager, but was otherwise all women, from project engineer to technician. They all sat in close proximity and chattered constantly. The topics ranged from home life to project changes.

A casual observer may have been put off by the recipe exchange without realizing how useful the chatter truly was. The project engineer always had a picture of the weekly overtime availability. All members were aware of the status of project elements and changes and could anticipate and adjust for how other peoples' work might affect their own. They shared software tips and tricks for maximum efficiency. The team easily met the schedule well under budget and no construction changes were caused by design flaws. This is a mere glimpse at what women project teams could be if left to develop on their own.

FINDINGS

Sixteen of the office's 75 technical employees responded to the survey. Eleven men (69%) and five women (31%) provided their thoughts on the fourteen questions based on their experiences. The office gender proportions match closely to the survey proportions, with women being right around critical mass.

The range of experience for women was 26 to 5.5 years with a median of 6 years. For men, their range was from 40 to 1.5 years, with a median of 12 years. The men had a nice blend of experience while the women were relatively new to the field. The office only has one woman manager and it is apparent that she responded to the survey. The women in the office are generally young and just breaking into supervisory roles. The survey respondents mirrored this demographic.

Experience with Women Managers and their Differences

Only two of the men had worked for a woman, which ironically were the two with the most and least experience. The median experience of 12 years explains why half had not worked for a woman since senior women would have been rare in their experience, but that does not explain the other half. Even without direct experience, male engineers with more experience were comfortable enough to offer a comparison. The three differences reported by men were that women were less likely to assume/take things for granted, better at communication, and had a greater need for socialization.

By contrast, all but the most experienced woman engineer reported to have worked for a woman. That's not surprising as statistically there would be few women her senior. Of the differences noted, the women observed very different tendencies than the men.

One woman noted that women were more aggressive than men and that women, "...tend to be better and faster than a lot of guys to get where they are." Another noted bossier tendencies, which could be the same as the aggressiveness noted by the first. Another woman found a difference in "approach to project management" and respect for deadlines, which she described as having a "better grasp on effort involved in reaching deadlines and better handle on when things needed to be completed in order to proceed to the next stage of the project in a timely fashion." This could also be described as having consideration for others and their time, or empathy. This might also be related to being able to focus on more than one thing at time, or multi-tasking.

Interestingly, 75% of the women to respond to the gender difference question expressed the possibility that differences they observed could just be the natural differences among individuals rather than trends. Were they being "less likely to assume" like the male engineer observed? Only one man of the four to respond to the same question made the same statement, and he was the engineer with only 1.5 years of experience.

How do you Want to be Managed?

There were no gender based differences in what people wanted from their manager. Universally, people expect a professional relationship and value their independence. They want to be challenged but guided when needed. More revealing data was gathered by the next two questions about their experience with the best and worst managers.

Experience with Bad Managers

When asked to describe their experience with a bad manager, the criticized qualities were many and varied. Men were criticized by men for lack of cooperation, communication, and leadership skills. Also micromanagement, inconsistency, and failure to keep their word. Another man was criticized for failing to confront an issue. Men were also criticized by women for poor communication, attitude of superiority, lack of sociability and approachability, and making unrealistic promises for their team without consultation (another communication issue.) Another respondent reported a male manager who was confident making decisions, but refused to own them.

Only two women were criticized and both were for related characteristics. A woman criticized a woman manager for being overly aggressive and a man criticized a woman for “freak[ing] out if she was left out of a decision...” The woman respondent offered the explanation that her overly aggressive woman was compensating for being in a male dominated profession. The same excuse might be extended to the other woman who was afraid to be left out of control situations.

Two women and no men made statements criticizing a manager’s characteristics then made it clear that the manager was a nice person overall. Their empathy knows no bounds.

Experience with Good/Inspirational Managers

When describing good managers, the men described male supervisors who were open, instructive, empathetic, and listened well. They were supportive of the employee’s decisions as well as career development, combining freedom with guidance for growth. None of the favorite managers were women, but the attributes some described (empathy, listening skills) are stereotypically feminine traits.

The four women who described good managers also described men, but their admired characteristics were split. Two described more general characteristics like teaching, patience, providing challenging work, and encouraging career development. The other two greatly admired their supervisor for more social skills, specifically even more feminine social skills. Both compliments involved family – one to making work like a second family, the other to balancing work well with family. The men describing managers either did not recognize such extensive nurturing attributes, or do not place a particular value on them. Alternatively, they could be describing it differently as empathy.

Gender Preference for Manager

The most common response to the question, “Do you prefer to work for a man or a woman?” was no preference. Most just expected their manager to possess the necessary skills. Three men admitted they had no experience with a woman manager and, therefore, could not fairly answer the question. Most of the men who expressed “no preference” without the caveat were older and more experienced even though they, too, had never been managed by a woman. It might be assumed that they had observed enough women as peers or under their command to be able to express confidence in either gender making satisfactory managers.

One woman waffled in indecision. She speculated that a woman would be better at multi-tasking, observing that men tend to “...obsess over one thing, letting others slide until the first task is fixed.” She also noted that a woman would be better at personal skills. But then she said that she had never had a problem with a male manager and thought they might be better at handling conflict in a straight-forward manner. She did not specifically say, “No preference,” but her written monologue never drew any conclusions. She was clearly looking at the question from every angle.

Five respondents expressed preference for a male manager. Two men honestly admitted they were uncomfortable with a woman manager. For one, he said he would have “no problem or issues with it”, but being managed by a woman was “just not as natural.” For the other, he felt, “...constrained and uneasy regarding the political correct world we live in.”

One man was looking for a boss with whom he could have a personal relationship. He felt he could relate easier with and tell personal stories better to someone more like himself. He felt that being of the same gender was important in building that relationship. He was alone in his gender for wanting a personal relationship with his boss, displaying a more feminine-typical preference.

Another man, concerned for his career development, felt that a woman manager would not be looking out for him. “[W]omen's focus on their career or other's career development is limited by outside priorities (lifestyles, families, etc.)” He had apparently not observed much career ambition in the women he worked around and wanted to set himself apart from that.

Unlike the men who expressed a preference with solid reasoning, the lone woman who chose to work for a man did so with a weak preference and only because she was used to it. She further explained that she felt it was important for managers to be able to make firm decisions that are accepted by others as final. She thought men met this expectation best. A man’s decisions, she explained, are accepted as final, whether they are right or not. Women’s decisions are not firm since they’re constantly looking at all possibilities. Her observations were illustrated by the indecisive woman simply trying to answer this question. This creative streak can be good for engineering and brainstorming, but can cause problems in management, especially if those working for the sometimes indecisive engineering manager never know when an answer is final.

Desired Employee Attributes

There were no gender-based differences in what a supervisor expected out of an employee. Generically, they all expected workers who were hard working, ethical, goal oriented, loyal, and full of initiative. In other words, they expected professionalism and a good work ethic. This is not surprising. However, even within the similarities of expectation, there were some conflicting explanations for this expectation. For example, one manager expected an, “Honest 8 hours work for 8 hours pay,” while another said, “I don't want a person that is not motivated and works 8 hours per day and leaves.” To one, working an eight hour day is an honest work ethic. To the other, ‘only’ working eight hours proves a lack of commitment.

Gender Preference for Employees

Eight respondents, six men and two women, had no preference to the question on which gender they would rather manage. Only two people, one woman and one man, felt the need to elaborate saying it was more about the individual’s talents and sense of responsibility.

Four men specified that they would prefer to manage men. For one, he preferred to avoid the emotional needs of women. Two were simply more comfortable with and could relate better with other men. Neither of the men considering relationships with employees to be important were the man who found significance in similarity of gender for the relationship with his manager. That means at least three of the men in the survey had some level of a softer, more feminine side in contradiction with the trend explained in the newsletter from the Institute for Management Excellence.²

Also similar to the reverse question above, one man preferred to manage men for their higher sense of personal accountability and initiative and also their improved focus on and ambition for career development. Not surprisingly, this was the same man who wanted his manager to be a man since women tend to be distracted from ambitious pursuits, like developing their career.

One woman expressed a weak preference in managing women simply because most of her experience had been in managing them. She also emphasized her team-promoting mentality by saying, “I prefer to think of it as working with and not managing.”

Word Association

Survey respondents were asked to give three characteristics they associate with each gender for managers and employees. Their answers were generally in keeping with stereotypes, but the characteristics each gender expressed were more often critical of the opposite while being favorable of their own kind. The complete list is in Appendix C, but a few thoughts are expressed below.

Women Employees

Both genders found women employees to be hardworking, eager to please, and empathetic. Further, men used the words nurturing, caring, mature, more collaborative, more organized, and accurate to describe women employees. But the compliments did not go much beyond there. Men found women in their command to be distracted and less productive, which could be caused by talking a lot and being more social. Women, they said, were also emotional and reserved in opinion, especially in disagreement. One man said they were dedicated and another implied they were not since they, “Want to put in their 8 hours and head home.”

Women predictably brought up the good points of their fellow workers. They associated women employees with attention to small detail, flexibility, talent for multi-tasking, dealing with problems instead of letting them fester, and personal skills, like listening. Women also noted their social nature, but only to say that they usually end up in charge of the social events, perhaps because the men will not. One woman did observe that women’s attention to detail can sometimes be to their detriment.

Men Employees

Men employees, according to men and women, are also hardworking, but they stray from their female counterparts with ambition, high motivation to succeed, and poor personal/communication skills. Men found themselves more technically savvy and more interested in their career and its advancement. They reported that they are aggressive and independent without gossiping and holding grudges. Men are natural to be engineers, leaders, and driven to succeed, but can be arrogant, according to their peers.

While men thought that women employees were too soft spoken, especially on issues of disagreement, women thought male employees avoided conflict. Either conflict avoidance is only performed in mixed company, or neither gender could admit to finding it as a predominant fault among their own kind.

Women also observed that men employees tend to make issues black and white, eliminating the gray. That may make decision making easier, but sometimes gray is useful. Men, according to women, focus only on the task at hand. They have an attitude of, “Get it done now...forge ahead...right or wrong.” Productivity like that has a place, but can be counterproductive in the end. On the other hand, the description is similar to another woman’s as, “More eager to try something and does not fear mistakes, whereas woman wants to get it right.” Both tactics have merit. Finally, women, in keeping with their social nature, thought of their male peers as, “Nice, but not as close of a friend.”

Women Managers

Both men and woman agreed that women managers are friendly, caring, and empathetic, yet also aggressive. Men thought women managers were also collaborative and delivered on commitment. However, they “play a power trip” and are either risk takers or risk adverse, depending on which man you ask. Men see women managers as either benefiting from the fruit of their hard work or simply meeting a quota. There may be both kinds of women managers, but one would think that the two would be easy to tell apart. Finally, men associate women managers with the words different, uncommon, and less natural.

A frequent observation, women noted that women managers were good listeners and communicators. They considered women do-it-yourselfers who care about and take ownership of projects. Women managers have, “Respect for deadlines and what is involved in reaching those deadlines by all parties”, giving loyalty to those who deliver good performance for them. Multi-tasking does not frazzle them, but they are generally single or childless, according to the responses.

Men Managers

When women and men think of male managers their minds go completely different directions. Men think of men managers as assertive while women think of them as ambitious. While these adjectives are similar, they are not a perfect match. Yet they are the sum total of the common ground between the two lists.

Men thought of themselves in management as demanding, independent risk takers who are focused on work. They are rigid in attitude and handle stress better. Words they associate with male managers are normal, natural, and leaders. Again, in seeming contradiction, one man said they show less empathy while another said they care more for their employees. It is possible these observations are not contradictory, but referring to different characteristics. A man may connect less with an employee on the personal level, but invest much of himself in that employee’s betterment at work. Both express sentiment of care for an employee, but on different levels.

Men managers, to women, are busy, decisive delegators who express concern for their company status. One woman thought of them as either single or married with the wife taking care of the household. As expected, and like Frank Gilbreth, the male manager’s concern is more for overall project mechanics like budget and scope instead of the human aspect. Still, some women observed men with little concept of the time involved in tasks performed by the project team who had a tendency to promise more than could be delivered in adequate, on time fashion. One said male managers were lax on deadlines. In other words, their concern for project mechanics sometimes got in the way of delivering on them. These women felt neglected as the human beings behind the mechanics. If men do not need recognition and appreciation in the same way as women, they may not realize the importance in providing it to the women they manage.

SUMMARY & CONCLUSIONS

This study found more women accepted in engineering and management than past studies, but did not find unconditional, universal acceptance, especially in management. Men were more accustomed to working with women, but not for women. This is probably a numbers game. As women make more of a presence higher in each organization, acceptance should become more natural. This can only happen as more significant numbers of women obtain their degrees and age into the organization and its positions.

In spite of expectations, the generic, gender-based characteristics for managers and employees still apply to engineers. The degree may differ between engineers and the general population, but the differences are still generally true. Women are, or at least are thought of as, the empathetic communicators and men are the aggressive, down-to-business types. Individuals may have adopted anti-stereotypical traits, but the trends are still observable.

Even with women at critical mass in an individual office, it is too early to observe women developing their own unique management styles. Women will probably need to be at critical mass specifically at manager levels before a useful study could take place. This is obviously some time off in the future.

Even as this survey did not show as much of women as supervisors as hoped, it did reveal a surprise. It was expected that successful feminine managerial traits could be identified for implementation by engineering managers of all kinds, but it seems that has already happened. As all respondents described their favorite managers, all of whom happened to be men, the most admired traits revealed their softer side. The favorite managers showed the empathy and communication skills that the same respondents associated most with women. Did these managers develop this style from exposure to so many women engineers in the office? Did they come by this style naturally? Are current overall management best-practices, independent of engineering, tending toward the softer style? Does the trend toward empowerment, and its nature to express concern for the individual, manifest itself as masculine empathy? It is hard to say. This area, too, could make interesting future research.

REFERENCES/BIBLIOGRAPHY

- ¹ Kirkham, Kate, and Paul Thompson. "Managing a Diverse Work Force: Women in Engineering." *Research Management*, March-April 1984, pp. 9-16.
- ² Simon, Victoria, and Holly Pedersen. "Male/Female Communication – Communicating with Men at Work: Bridging the Gap with Male Co-Workers and Employees." Institute for Management Excellence, March 2005 Newsletter, www.itstime.com/mar2005.htm.
- ³ "If Women Ruled the World: A Washington Dinner Party." PBS Broadcasting, filmed June 23, 1999. www.ifwomenruledtheworld.com/index.htm.
- ⁴ Gale, Andrew, and Susan Cartwright. "Women in project management: Entry into a male domain? A discussion on gender and organizational culture – Part 1." *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*. Volume 16, Number 2. (1995). p. 3-8.

APPENDIX A: Survey Administered

Greetings:

This survey is being conducted as part of a Masters Degree project. Please turn off your political correctness button and answer the following questions as honestly and completely as possible. The information gathered will be analyzed and reported collectively. Feel free to type your answers if you prefer for confidentiality. Please return your printed surveys to the labeled envelope in any break room by **May 16**. Thank you in advance for your cooperation.

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

1. How many years have you been working in the engineering industry?
2. How many years have you worked in XYZ's Overland Park Office?
3. What is your gender?

BEING MANAGED

4. Have you ever worked for a woman engineer?
5. If yes, did you note any differences between working for men compared with working for women? Please explain.
6. How do you want to be managed (by anyone)?
7. Have you ever worked for someone who just "rubbed you the wrong way"? Relate a sample experience including the genders of the players involved.
8. Have you ever worked for someone you really enjoyed working with or really motivated you? Relate an experience including the gender of those involved.

9. Would you rather be managed by a woman or a man? Why?

MANAGING

10. What is your management style? (For help in describing your style, you may find it useful to read the October 1996 or March 2003 newsletters from The Institute for Management Excellence at <http://www.itstime.com/oct96.htm> or <http://www.itstime.com/mar2003.htm>.)

11. How do you think your management style is received?

12. What do you look for in an employee/worker?

13. Would you rather manage women or men? Why?

GENERAL

14. Name three characteristics you associate with ...

- a. women employees.
- b. men employees.
- c. women managers.
- d. men managers.

APPENDIX B: Survey Results

APPENDIX C: Word Association Summary

Characteristics of Women Employees

By men

Hard working (2)
Eager to learn
Eager to please
Most sensitive
Empathetic (2)
Mature
Softer spoken
More collaborative
More social
Nurturing
Caring
Want to put in their 8 hours and head home
Have a chip on their shoulder in male dominated industry
Petty disagreements affect their production
Hold grudges
Spend more time talking than men
Mostly task-oriented
Follow directions
Sometimes distracted
More organized
Less productive
Accurate
Emotional
Valued
Very qualified
Dedicated
Reserved in opinion (especially disagreement)

By women

Friendly (2)
Hard working
Eager to please
Attention to small details
Attentive to other client's, employee's feelings
In charge of social events
Flexible
Multi-tasking
Attention to detail – sometimes too much so
Respect for co-workers, at least to their faces
Tendencies to deal with problems rather than allowing them to fester
Diligent
Listeners/personal skills

Characteristics of Men Employees

By men

Hard working
Ask pertinent questions
Like to do more than what's on their plate
More independent
Focused on business
Assertive (2)
More outspoken and driven
Not as effective with communication skills as women
More technically savvy
Results oriented
Investigative
Dominating
Work harder, especially long hours to get the job done
More driven to succeed
Do not gossip or hold grudges
Focused on the job
Thinking ahead about career/advancement
Good time management
Less accurate
Natural
Leaders
Needed
Aggressive (2)
Ambitious
Arrogant

By women

Hardworking
Ambitious
Kidders
Focused on task at hand
Tendency to make issues black & white, eliminating anything "gray"
"Get it done now...forge ahead...right or wrong"
Avoid conflict
Greater lack of respect for co-workers
High motivation to succeed
More eager to try something and does not fear mistakes, whereas woman wants to get it right
Nice but not as close of a friend
No personal skills

Characteristics of Women Managers

By men

Demanding (2)
Stand by on their decisions
Deliver on commitment
More sensitive
Empathetic
Mature
More collaborative in their approach
Not as assertive
Risk adverse
May show empathy
Fought very hard to gain position or in position to meet quota
Play power trip
Act like the world is against them
Different
Less natural
Uncommon
Over-qualified
Risk takers
Aggressive

By women

Good listener
Friendly
Caring
Do-it-yourselfers
Communication
Care about/take ownership of projects
Aggressive
Single (or childless)
Minority of managers
Respect for deadlines and what is involved in reaching those deadlines by all parties
Want to do it all themselves
Loyalty to those who deliver good performance
Not frazzled by multi-tasking
More cautious with confrontation

Characteristics of Men Managers

By men

Demanding (2)
Willing to help along the way
Rigid in their attitude
More independent
Focused on business
Assertive
More risk-takers
Less patient with employees
Handle stress better
Will not show much empathy
More willing to be your friend
Care more for their employees
Accountable
Focused on helping others develop
Leaders with vision
Normal
Natural
Leaders
Less aggressive than employees
Less arrogant than employees
Welcome everyone's input
Very qualified, but sometimes promoted "just because"

By women

Out-going
Ambitious
Busy
Delegators
Concern for company status
Concern about budgets/scope/fee – mechanics of projects
Majority of managers
Decisive
Single (or wife takes care of house and kids)
Lackadaisical approach to deadlines
Little concept of time involved in tasks performed by the project team
Tendency to promise more than can be delivered in adequate, on time fashion
More direct with confrontation
Sometimes one-sided, can only do things one way

Endnotes

¹ Kirkham, Kate, and Paul Thompson. "Managing a Diverse Work Force: Women in Engineering." *Research Management*, March-April 1984, pp. 9-16.

² Simon, Victoria, and Holly Pedersen. "Male/Female Communication – Communicating with Men at Work: Bridging the Gap with Male Co-Workers and Employees." Institute for Management Excellence, March 2005 Newsletter, www.itstime.com/mar2005.htm.

³ "If Women Ruled the World: A Washington Dinner Party." PBS Broadcasting, filmed June 23, 1999. www.ifwomenruledtheworld.com/index.htm.

⁴ Gale, Andrew, and Susan Cartwright. "Women in project management: Entry into a male domain? A discussion on gender and organizational culture – Part 1." *Leadership & Organization Development Journal*. Volume 16, Number 2. (1995). p. 3-8.