

TITLE: Characteristics Common Among Highly Educated Managers

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OBJECTIVE: To identify common characteristics of highly educated manager in comparison with less educated managers.

METHODOLOGY: Managers were surveyed across 15 different corporations (N = 125; response rate = 35.7%). They completed the LPI-Self, the Leader Behavior Description Questionnaire (LBDQ, Form XII), the Motivational Pattern Inventory (Byrd & Neher, 1990) and provided demographic information. About two-thirds of the respondents were male. Thirty-one percent were between 36 to 45 years of age, and another 37% were between 46 to 55 years old. Seventy-five percent of the respondents were married; nearly all (94%) were caucasian. About 30 percent of the respondents had a graduate degree (N=37) while 35 percent had a bachelor's degree (N=44). Over 50 percent had been managers for less than 10 years, and likewise over 50% had been employed with their current employers fewer than 10 years. The majority of respondents were from service industries (43%), followed by manufacturing (24%), development (14%), education (10%), and government (8%). The majority functioned in operations or engineering (38%), with 14% in human resources, 11% in marketing, 9% in planning, 9% in customer service, and about 14% classified as owner/administrators.

KEY FINDINGS: Highly educated managers were not found to differ significantly from less highly educated managers in the five leadership practices (Challenging, Inspiring, Enabling, Modeling, and Encouraging). Similarly, no significant differences between managers based on their educational levels were found for motivational patterns (hunters, farmers, or shepards), leadership styles (democratic or autocratic) or leadership behaviors (initiation of structure, tolerance of freedom, role assumption, and consideration). "These findings suggest that higher education does not stimulate in managers different leadership behaviors (p. 137)...the findings of this study imply that leadership behaviors, style, practices and motivational patterns are not learned through higher education (p. 138)