

— From the Pen of —  
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## Management Styles

There are several styles of management. The *scientific management style* has maximum concern for accomplishment, but people are merely tools for the accomplishment. This management style is a laborious or toilsome type of management; people are nothing more than necessary instruments or machines to accomplish tasks. This sort of management style often develops in religious situations. Generally, though not always, it is the product of a highly insecure but domineering leader. Scientific management has maximum concern for accomplishment but a regard for people that is subhuman.

The other extreme is *country club management* which says that the thing we are concerned about most is the happiness of these people. Whether or not we do anything is quite irrelevant. This is where people work together around a swimming pool with tall cold drinks at their elbows. Everybody is just happy; and at any gathering, or any situation, the whole concern is for happiness. This was epitomized in President Lyndon Johnson's speech one time when he turned to a heckler and said, "Why don't you people be happy?"—as though happiness is primo!

Another style, unfortunately, is *impoverished management*. This occurs when a person is neither motivated by a very great respect for the dignity of human personalities under his or her care, nor is the manager very much concerned about getting the product out the back door and on the truck and shipped. Do not make the mistake of assuming that this kind of management style does not exist in Christian circles. It does. Often enough pastors fit this category. They are satisfied to maintain things as they are, concerned only that their job is secure.

Another style of management is a *compromise management*. It is neither dynamic nor is it dormant. It is active, it is alive, but barely. It is a middle-of-the-road kind of management. Compromise managers want you to be happy, but not too happy. We will do anything to make you happy if it does not mean too much trouble. Certainly, we want to achieve something. We really want to evangelize this country, but we are not going to sweat or toil about it. We are not going to get excited or "hot under the collar" about it. In a UCLA survey, it was discovered from the estimate of thousands of managers in top-middle-lower echelons in America that 65 percent of industrial managers adjust their management style to this position. What does that mean regarding Christian managers? What percentage of people involved in religious work use compromise management?

There are other alternatives, but one style that often emerges is wide-arc *pendulum-swing management* where a person swings back and forth from one style of management to the other. An inspirational sermon shakes complacency, and the person makes sudden changes and clamps down on everybody. The result is that everybody becomes tense. Then someone comes along and says to the manager, "If you aren't good, we will not reelect you." So, swinging back over to a country-club position, the manager apologizes and seeks to smooth out the situation. That is the wide-arc pendulum-swing. Its chief characteristics are vacillation and inconsistency.

There is another position, the best one. *Concern management* is a combination of concern for people in its maximum manifestation with a concern for production or accomplishment to its absolute maximum. The Lord Jesus Christ epitomized this management style. He demonstrated the perfect combination of concern for people with concern for accomplishment.