

# The Three Little Managers



A parable with a purpose

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Notes:

## The Three Little Managers



Built his/her house out of straw



Built his/her house from sticks



Built his/her house with bricks



## First Manager

A light weight

Few want to work for this manager

Being one of this manager's team  
is not the way to move up

Considered and unskilled manager

No wonder the Big Bad Wolf blew  
his/her house down!



## Second Manager

A well intentioned manager

Has some good skills and generally does an acceptable job

Many like to work for this manager

Some of his people do okay career wise

But the big bad wolf blew his house down too.....Why?



## Third Manager

A true heavyweight manager

Has excellent skills and uses Them

Not everyone wants to work for this manager, but those that do, and survive, almost always wind up high on the career ladder

The big bad wolf couldn't blow this manager's house down...  
What makes him/her so special?





**Takes the path most affordable**



**Takes the path of least resistance**



**Takes the path for the future**



**Will commit operating capital for future gains**



**Won't invest operating capital for the future**



**Will "test" using some operating capital**



**Accepts change**



**Causes and wants change**



**Resents change**



**Flexible standards**



**Rigid standards**



**Escalating standards**



**Quality first**



**Quantity first**



**Balances quality and quantity**



**Assumes product quality  
and checks impact of product**



**Inspects all final products for quality**



**Spot checks final product**



**Manages the processes with management controls**



**Reviews processes annually**



**Assumes the process is working**



**Manages in the moment**



**Future concerns are with direction, speed, timing, and the impact on personnel**



**Future concerns are with managing results**

	<b>Documents impact of product</b>
	<b>Documents activity</b>
	<b>Documents production</b>

	<b>Predictable</b>
	<b>Mostly predictable</b>
	<b>Unpredictable</b>



**Uses employees talents**



**Trains employees for their jobs**



**Mentors employees into the future**



**Concern with doing the right things**



**Concern with doing things right**



**Low attention to detail**



**General goals for production and conduct**



**Goals for direction, process and improvement**



**Specific goals for production**



**#1 Concern > Processes**



**#1 Concern > Team relationships**



**#1 Concern > Employee productivity**



**What is done is vital**



**Why it is done is vital**



**How it is done is more vital**



**Communicate with employees in writing**



**Communicate with employees orally**



**Communicate with employees with a combination of oral and written means**



**Listens to the boss**



**Listens**



**Listens to employees**



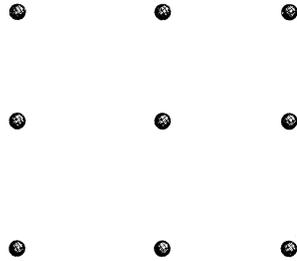
**Add an item from your table group to each**



**Add an item from your table group to each**



**Add an item from your table group to each**



“Think outside of the box.”

If I hear that one more time I may lose it entirely. The expression comes from a simple little nine-dot puzzle. Connect all nine dots, without lifting your pen from the paper, with four straight lines. I suspect that few that use the expression can work the solution. More than that, they fail to understand that working outside of the box is different than disregarding the existence of the box entirely.

Successful thinking must have a dimension that defines success. In the nine dot puzzle, the dots form the box that you must work outside of to solve the puzzle. Without the dots there is no reference point for victory. It seems to me that failure to define the reference points that allow us to comprehend and feel victory is a common managerial mistake. Leaders must provide a vision of what victory looks like and then share with subordinates how it feels. The exhilaration of success recognized is the reward. It is that rush of adrenaline that comes with the touchdown that keeps the football team and each member playing harder. We tend to over emphasize the need for monetary awards, trophies and medals. I suggest if we could just give employees that emotional rush on a daily basis, we could keep them forever.

So how do we make our employees want to cheer out loud? That is the real question isn't it? Wouldn't it be great if we could get everyone to leave work cheering “Yes!” to him or her self? Or we could see them charging in the door at home and telling their families how great the day was. Maybe, for the more conservative of our folks, going to their significant other and bragging about what they did today will be enough. Think of the change this would mean at your workplace. Imagine you going home with a smile on your face and starting the conversation with, “Guess what I did today...”

Discuss in your groups how you might feel victory or success in your workplace. How can the leadership of your organizations help create true spirit of celebration about the work you do?

Puzzle solution on reverse side