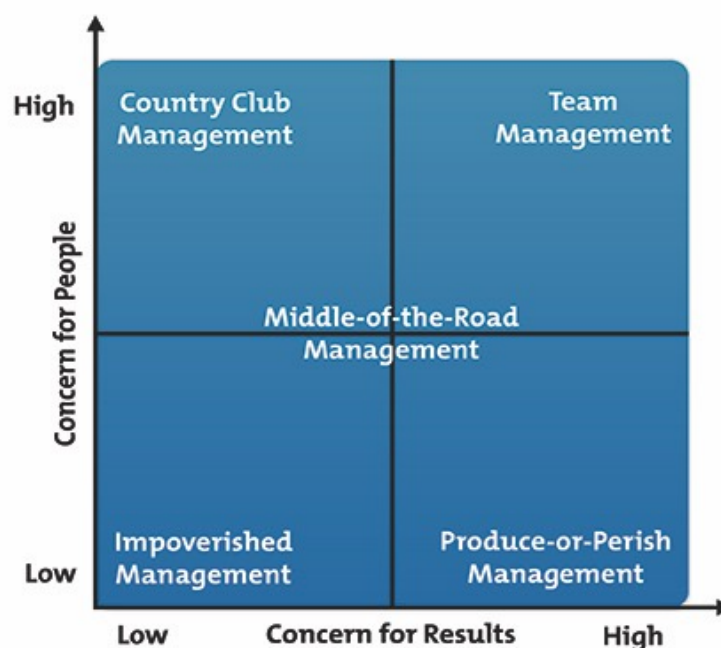


Blake Moulten Managerial Grid

Developed by Robert Blake and Jane Mouton in the early 1960s, the managerial grid helps us to understand personal and organisational leadership tendencies.

The Managerial Grid is based on two behavioural dimensions:

1. Concern for People – This is the degree to which a leader considers the needs of team members, their interests and areas of personal development when deciding how best to accomplish a task.
2. Concern for Production – This is the degree to which a leader emphasises concrete objectives, organisational efficiency and high productivity when deciding how best to accomplish a task



Country Club Leadership – High People/Low Production

This style of leader is most concerned about the needs and feelings of members of his/her team. These people operate under the assumption that as long as team members are happy and secure then they will work hard. What tends to result is a work environment that is very relaxed and fun but where production suffers due to lack of direction and control.

Produce or Perish Leadership – High Production/Low People

Also known as Authoritarian or Compliance Leaders, people in this category believe that employees are simply a means to an end. Employee needs are always secondary to the need for efficient and productive workplaces. This type of leader is very autocratic, has strict work rules, policies, and procedures, and views punishment as the most effective means to motivate employees.

Impoverished Leadership – Low Production/Low People

This leader is mostly ineffective. He/she has neither a high regard for creating systems for getting the job done, nor for creating a work environment that is satisfying and motivating. The result is a place of disorganisation, dissatisfaction and disharmony.

Middle-of-the-Road Leadership – Medium Production/Medium People

This style seems to be a balance of the two competing concerns. It may at first appear to be an ideal compromise. Therein lies the problem, though: When you compromise, you necessarily give away a bit of each concern so that neither production nor people needs are fully met. Leaders who use this style settle for average performance and often believe that this is the most anyone can expect.

Team Leadership – High Production/High People

According to the Blake Mouton model, this is the pinnacle of managerial style. These leaders stress production needs and the needs of the people equally highly. The premise here is that employees are involved in understanding organisational purpose and determining production needs. When employees are committed to, and have a stake in the organisation's success, their needs and production needs coincide. This creates a team environment based on trust and respect, which leads to high satisfaction and motivation and, as a result, high production.

Applying the Blake Mouton Managerial Grid

Being aware of the various approaches is the first step in understanding and improving how well you perform as a manager. It is important to understand how you currently operate, so that you can then identify ways of becoming competent in both realms.

Step One: Identify your leadership style

- Think of some recent situations where you were the leader.
- For each of these situations, place yourself in the grid according to where you believe you fit.

Step Two: Identify areas of improvement and develop your leadership skills

- ¥ Look at your current leadership method and critically analyse its effectiveness.
- ¥ Look at ways you can improve. Are you settling for 'middle of the road' because it is easier than reaching for more?
- ¥ Identify ways to get the skills you need to reach the Team Leadership position. These may include involving others in **problem solving** or improving how you **communicate** with them, if you feel you are too task-oriented. Or it may mean becoming clearer about **scheduling** or **monitoring project progress** if you tend to focus too much on people.
- ¥ Continually monitor your performance and watch for situations when you slip back into bad old habits.

Step Three: Put the Grid in Context

It is important to recognise that the Team Leadership style isn't always the most effective approach in every situation. While the benefits of democratic and participative management are universally accepted, there are times that call for more attention in one area than another. If your company is in the midst of a merger or some other significant change, it is often acceptable to place a higher emphasis on people than on production. Likewise, when faced with an economic hardship or physical risk, people concerns may be placed on the back burner, for the short-term at least, to achieve high productivity and efficiency.

Note:

Theories of leadership have moved on a certain amount since the Blake Mouton Grid was originally proposed. In particular, the context in which leadership occurs is now seen as an important driver of the leadership style used.

And in many situations, the "Team Leader" as an ideal has moved to the ideal of the "Transformational Leader"