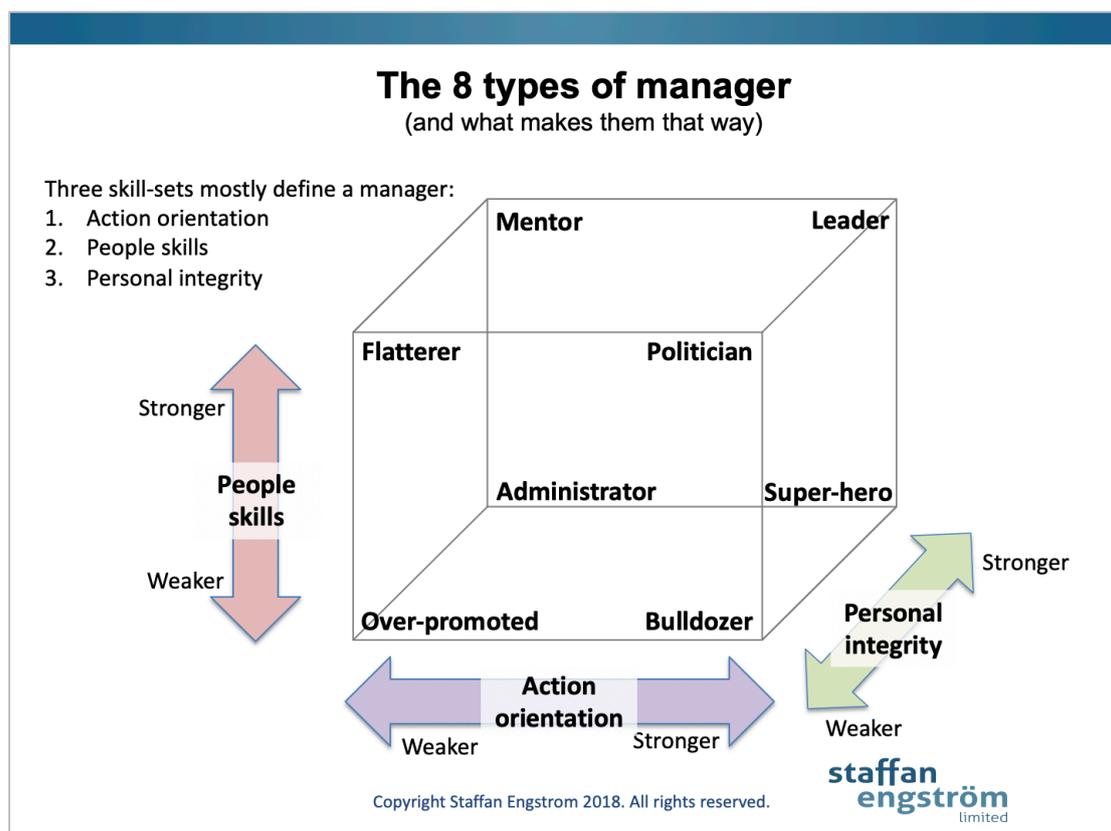


## What kind of manager are you?

As part of my coaching and mentoring practice I am often faced with issues that clients have regarding how they can be better managers.

In my experience, there are 3 sets of key competencies that have the most significant impact in shaping management cadre. The relative strengths or limitations of managers in each of those competencies defines them into one of 8 generic manager 'types'. I have set this out in the diagram below.



Here are the three skillsets that define a manager:

- **Their action orientation** is their ability to see the way forward, define appropriate goals, and focus efforts onto achieving them with urgency.
- **Their people skills** are how they appreciate and respond to the needs and skills of people, matching the right skills with the right tasks.
- **Their personal integrity** is how they build trust with people, thereby developing open and productive relationships.

The diagram above shows how each of the skills defines the 8 types of manager. How many of them do you recognise? They are described below:

1. **The Over-promoted** manager does not have the skills, experience or ability to do the job that they are supposed to be doing. It is also known as the 'Peter Principle'. The result is usually painful for all.
2. **The Bulldozer** is a manager who has the ability to make things happen (and so can be very useful), but who creates much collateral damage on the way as their single-minded focus overrides everything else.
3. **The Flatterer** is a manager who has good people skills but lacks the integrity (a.k.a. courage) to face issues that need to be faced. This leads to unhelpful compromises, poor decisions, and 'elephants in the room'.
4. **The Administrator** is competent and trustworthy, but lacks the focus for results, or the ability to engage people's needs and skills.
5. **The Politician** is a Flatterer with action orientation. They are skilled in understanding people and driven in getting results. However, they are not trusted, so don't readily develop followers.
6. **The Mentor** is well experienced and good at relationships but holds back from responsibility for delivering results, more comfortable with arms-length advice than action.
7. **The Super-hero** is a Bulldozer with integrity, so gets results and is trusted but mistakes in selecting and managing people lead to them doing too much themselves, in compensation for poor delegation.
8. **The Leader** has all three skills, they create direction for the organisation, manage and understand people, and are trusted so that people will follow their lead.

### How to be a better manager

It's tempting to use the model to categorise the managers that you work with, but the bigger question is: How can you be a better manager?

We can always do better, no matter how good we are. So, thinking about this framework, talk to trusted colleagues about their view regarding the axes where you are stronger or weaker, and why. (NB: To get honest help, don't ask: "Am I good at action orientation?" because they will probably be too polite to tell you! Instead, try asking questions like: "Do you think I am stronger at action orientation or people skills? Why do you say that?" etc).

Awareness is the first stage of improvement.

### Staffan Engström