

Why ISEs Go Into Management

by: Steve Snelling

Later in their career, many Industrial & Systems Engineers (ISEs) will often go into management positions (both engineering management and general management). The same Systems Thinking and Project Management skills that many ISEs develop, carry over well into management positions. ISEs usually enjoy working with people and often can make the transition from managing small teams on projects, to managing groups full time. Leading small teams and leading a group full time, utilizes similar skills and viewpoints. The biggest adjustment is often being satisfied with letting others do much of the actual work, while the manager directs their efforts and helps them succeed.

The transition into senior management positions will usually depend more on available opportunities and personal interests. Sometimes it is helped by getting an advanced degree; often a Masters in Business Administration (MBA) for general management positions, or a Masters in Engineering (ME) for engineering management positions. It often helps to develop an understanding of the business side of the Operation or Facility, and not just be focused on the technical side of the products or services being provided at the site. Being mentored by other senior managers, can be very useful for young engineers or first level managers who wish to go into senior management positions.