Sabotaging Productivity the CIA Way

October 15, 2021

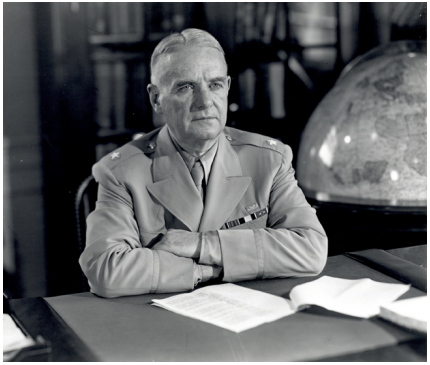
~~Matt Williams /~~ matt@matthewkwilliams.com ~~/~~
~~@matt_k_williams~~ (Redacted for your safety)

Welcome Recruits!

CONFIDENTIAL
CENTRAL INTELLIGENCE AGENCY
UNITED STATES OF AMERICA
TOP SECRET

OSS

General William J. Donovan



- Director of OSS
- Founding Father of CIA
- Ambassador to Thailand

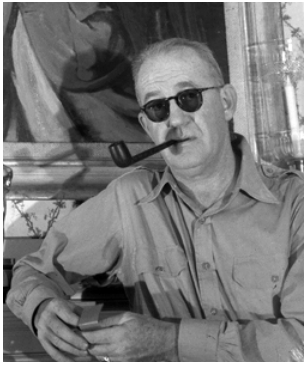
Julia Childs

- Celebrity Chef
- First foray into the world of cooking was a recipe for shark repellant still in use today

Arthur Schlesinger, Jr

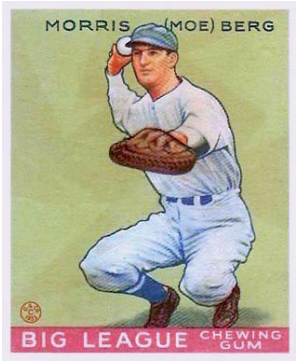
- Historian
- Social Critic

John Ford



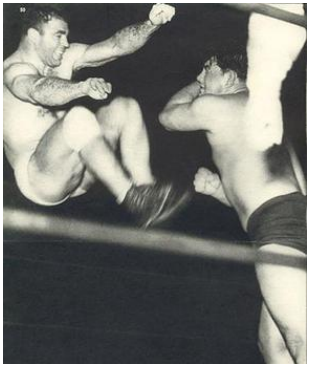
- Movie Director
- Rear Admiral

Moe Berg

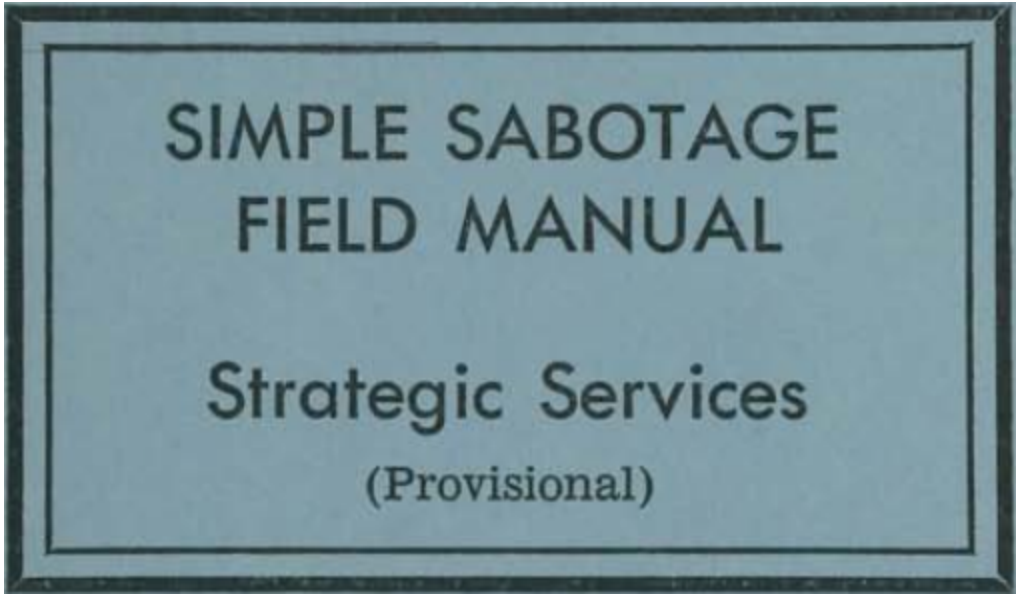


- Baseball Catcher and Coach
- The “brainiest guy in baseball” — sent to recruit Werner Heisenberg
- Occasionally employed by CIA after WWII

“Jumping Joe” Savoldi



- Wrestler
- Football Player


SIMPLE SABOTAGE
FIELD MANUAL
Strategic Services
(Provisional)

Be Vigilant!

Opportunities to sabotage exist everywhere.

(Some hide as best or good business practices)

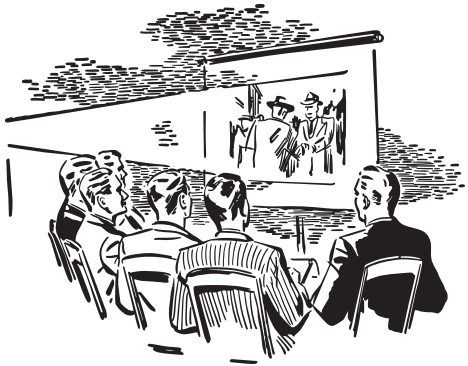
Pursue universal opportunities to make decisions. Exhaustive experimentation makes better products. Slow and steady wins the race.

Insist that all tasks and assignments are documented. The more complete and complex the documentation, the better.

Insist on doing everything through “channels.” Never permit short-cuts to be taken in order to expedite decisions.

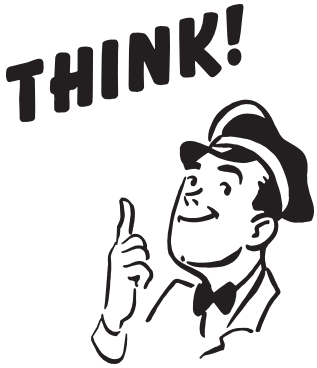
Meet regularly. Make “speeches.” Talk as frequently as possible and at great length. Illustrate your “points” by long anecdotes and accounts of personal experiences.

When possible, refer all matters to committees, for “further study and consideration.” Attempt to make the committees as large as possible — never less than five.



Your issues are important, not irrelevant. Bring them up as frequently as possible to create the best designs and decisions.

Agreeing on precise wordings of communications, minutes, and resolutions is essential.



People make mistakes. Refer back to matters decided upon at the last meeting and attempt to re-open the question of the advisability of that decision.

Advocate “caution.” Be “reasonable” and urge your fellow-conferees to be “reasonable” and avoid haste which might result in embarrassments or difficulties later on.

Be worried about the propriety of any decision — raise the question of whether such action as contemplated lies within the jurisdiction of the group or whether it might conflict with the policy of some higher echelon.

In the interest of morale, hold conferences and parties when there is more critical work to be done.

Multiply paper work in plausible ways. Start duplicate files — for redundency. If one storage system is good, then two are better — each with their own set of reports.

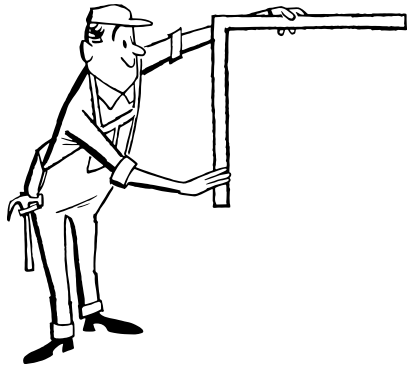
Procedures and processes are good. Multiply the procedures and clearances involved in issuing instructions, pay checks, and so on. See that three people have to approve everything where one would do.

In the interest of regulatory compliance, apply all regulations to the last letter.

Automated systems reduce workloads. The more complex — the more it can do — the better!

Join or help organize a group for presenting employee problems to the management. The procedures adopted should involve the presence of a large number of employees at each presentation and entail more than one meeting for each grievance to be fair to everyone. Every problem is important.

Measurements are good. More measurements are better.
Remember that you don't know what you don't measure.



IT'S
Easy

Choose processes and tools over individuals & interactions

Choose comprehensive documentation over working products

Choose contract negotiation over customer collaboration

Choose following a plan over responding to change

Choose management from above over individuals

Choose opinions and assumptions over empirical observations

Choose a culture of fear and blame over safety to experiment

REMEMBER

We're from the Government & We're Here to Help!

LET Freedom RING

References

- The Art of Simple Sabotage - CIA
- Simple Sabotage Field Manual by United States. Office of Strategic Services - Free Ebook
- Julia Child and the OSS Recipe for Shark Repellent - CIA
- An updated agile manifesto. The agile manifesto reads like… | by Mark Barber
- Manifesto for Agile Software Development
- The Agile Manifesto updated | agilesista