The trait approach is the school of thought that states that leaders are born not made. It was the first theory on leadership to emerge. Studies were conducted in order to isolate the characteristics of a leader. The theories that emerged form these studies were called the "great man" theories and it was believed that only "great" people processed these characteristics. (Northhouse 19)

Stogdill (1948)	Mann (1959)	Stogdill (1974)	Lord, DeVader, and Alliger (1986)	Kirkpatrick and Locke (1991)	Zaccaro, Kemp, and Bader (2004)
intelligence	intelligence	achievement	intelligence	drive	cognitive abilities
alertness	masculinity	persistence	masculinity	motivation	extraversion
insight	adjustment	insight	dominance	integrity	conscientiousness
responsibility	dominance	initiative		confidence	emotional stability
initiative	extraversion	self-confidence		cognitive ability	openness
persistence	conservatism	responsibility		task knowledge	agreeableness
self-confidence		cooperativeness			motivation
sociability		tolerance			social intelligence
		influence			self-monitoring
		sociability			emotional intelligence
					problem solving

Strengths:
> Intuitively appealing
> Backed by research
> Focuses on the leader
> Gives guidelines to effective leadership

Criticisms:
> Lacking a definitive list of traits
> Fails to take situations into account
> Subjective lists not grounded in strong reliable research
> Failed to look at traits in relationship to leadership outcomes

Practical Use:
> If you were a business owner you might want to scout out your employees for these traits in order to groom some of them for leadership positions within your company. You may want to look around and see if any leaders have informally emerged within your company. Which possess social intelligence and cognitive intelligence? Which have determination and self-confidence? It does not take a genius to see that these are desirable traits in anyone. If the choice is between someone who is very intelligent but has no determination or someone of slightly less intelligence but tons of determination, it may be in the organizations best interest to hire the determined individual even though he may not be as intelligent.