

# Review of both gladiator and the matrix essay sample



**ASSIGN  
BUSTER**

I have chosen to review two movies; both of them are my favorite movies. The movies are "Gladiator" and "The Matrix". One is set in time that is past and the other in the future. We can see how leadership is as relevant in the past as in the future only the forms change.

## **Executive Summary**

### **Gladiator**

The movie is set in 180 A. D. The movie is essentially a story of a roman general General Maximus (Russell Crowe), who is extremely loyal to Caesar (Richard Harris) and is chosen by the Caesar to be the next heir to the throne. This doesn't make Caesar's son Commodus (Joaquin Phoenix) very happy so he kills his father before he makes the announcement.

Commodus orders Maximus to be killed, but somehow Maximus escapes. When Maximus reaches his home he finds that his family is dead and comes to know that this is all on Commodus' orders. Seeing this he is devastated. He is soon captured by Proximo (Oliver Reed ) who trains gladiators to fight and earns a living entertaining people with the fights between the gladiators.

Maximus also becomes a gladiator, not by choice, but by compulsion and commands respect from his fellow gladiators. After the death of his family his only wish is to take revenge from Commodus. His only hope to take revenge is to go to Rome as a gladiator and kill Commodus while he is watching sports in the amphitheater.

Towards the end of the film, Maximus kills the Commodus and is able to make the roman empire a republic again.

The movie beautifully depicts Maximus as a leader and as people oriented person. He commands respect of his troops when he was the general, and later when he became the gladiator, he gained the respect and trust of the fellow gladiators. He was someone who could be depended upon.

### **The Matrix**

The movie is a sci-fi movie and set in year 2199. The world is taken over by machines and is being run by artificial intelligence. The machines “cultivate” humans in mega farms. As the energy sources are not available then, humans are being cultivated for energy their body generates i. e humans are reduced to “dry cell”. The Matrix is a computer generated dream world to keep the humans in control. Humans live their lives in an artificial reality never realizing that they are slaves of the machines that has a false claim on the world.

A few humans led by Morpheus (Laurence Fishburne), discover the true horror of the Matrix. They believe that computer programmer Thomas Anderson (Keanu Reeves), who by night is a computer hacker nick named Neo, and in the day an ordinary programmer, is “the one,” who according to prophesy from oracle, will save the world from cyber-slavery. The AI is aware of these rebel humans and confronts Morpheus through Agent Smith (Hugo Weaving).

The story then is how Morpheus trains Neo and makes him realize his true potential. Neo is unaware of his gift, but it is Morpheus who persistently reminds Neo that he is far more capable than he believes.

If one watches these movies, they are quite similar in a way. In Gladiator Maximus is seen as only hope for other gladiators to be free and is also seen as only one who can win the hearts of the people of Rome and make Rome a republic again. Similarly in Matrix, Neo which means “ new”, is seen as the only hope for the people of Zion to be free from Matrix and from the rule by machines.

In both the movies, the leaders are born as a consequence of circumstances. In Gladiator we know that Maximus was a general, but he wanted to leave everything and go back home to his family. But it was fate that made him a leader again, but this time of the gladiators.

In Matrix, Neo is seen as recluse and hardly gets along with other people. However, Morpheus trains Neo and makes him realize that he is more capable than others to take the job of liberating the people. Neo realizes that, and also realizes that there is no way back to the world he lived before. He has no choice but to lead people to freedom.

### **Character analysis and elements of leadership**

#### **Gladiator**

Maximus :

Being a general in the army, Maximus is seen as a leader. He commands respect not only from his troops, but also from his superior, Casear in this case. He empathizes with his troops and knows most of them personally. Maximus has a great ability to motivate people. This is evident from the first scene of the film, when his army which is too tired fighting many battles is

<https://assignbuster.com/review-of-both-gladiator-and-the-matrix-essay-sample/>

again is preparing to fight the barbarians in Germania. Their morale is low but Maximus is able to motivate his troops and win the war again. He is also not very power hungry and is a simple man at heart. He loves his family and wants to return to it and get back to simple way of life leaving his high profile life as a general.

Maximus' MBTI type would be ESFJ, but after the traumatic experience of having seen his family murdered, he became introvert. The MBTI preferences are elaborated further below.

Extraversion: Maximus while in the army leads his people not authoritatively but by commanding respect. He knows most of his troops and he interacts with in the field. He is highly tuned the environment he is in and prepares himself accordingly. After the traumatic experience of witnessing the murder of his family, he becomes an introvert. He is reserved and does not let his ideas and thoughts out. He kind of maintains a guard between himself and others.

Sensing: Maximus trusts his experience. When he is out in the arena fighting along with other gladiators, he tells them that the best chance they have for survival is by working together, like in an army. He is extremely oriented to present realities. He knows that he could be killed by Commodus any time, but is also aware that if he wins the heart of Romans, it would be difficult for Commodus to have him killed .

Feeling: Maximus is very tuned to the environment. He is guided by his personal values. He is very empathetic towards his troops and relates to

them at a very deep level. He is also very attached to his family. He assesses impact of decisions on his people.

Judging: We can see that maximus has a long term plan for his future. He plans to go back to his family and get back to farming. He is also very systematic and methodical. This can be seen from the fact that when he meets Senator in his cell, he has a detailed plan thought out to take on Commodus.

### **Commodus:**

Commodus is seen as very selfish and incapable ruler in the film. He is extremely driven by greed and lust for power. So much so that he even kills his father for getting the empire. He is someone who is disliked by many including his father.

Commodus is not very confident of himself. He relies on his sister to take decisions for him. He is also not very assertive in voicing his opinions in senate. He is seen as extravagant by ordering 180 days of games, but again seen as very clever by distracting people's attention away from the political developments that have recently happened.

Commodus' MBTI type would be INTP. The detailed analysis follows.

Introversion: Commodus is not very popular in the army. He is seen as someone who keeps to himself and is not very open to others. He plans out on his own and has a very few loyal followers. He is apparently takes decisions only when the issue is extremely urgent or important. The evidence of this is that during a meeting of senate when the senators try to

draw his attention to the urgent matters that concern people of Rome, Commodus just ignores them and walks out of the meeting.

Intuition: It appears that Commodus not very oriented to present realities. He is very detached from the people of Rome and their needs. However in ordering games for 180 days, he tries to distract people from their problems. It is not clear if it was Commodus' idea to start the games or one of his loyalists', but assuming it was Commodus's idea shows that he is oriented to future possibilities.

Thinking: To get the throne, Commodus kills his own father. Though he loved his father but he knew that if he did not kill him, he would lose the throne. This shows that Commodus is ruled by his head and not by his heart. He would do anything that would benefit him. He sees the ultimate objective, and uses any means to get to it, be it fair or not. When he stabs Maximus in the arena with a hidden knife, he breaks all the rules, but he is not bothered by that as his objective is to kill Maximus. Also as stated in the above paragraph about games, he uses a cause and effect reasoning. The cause would be entertainment and the effect would be acceptability of his rule by people.

Perceiving: Commodus is not very methodical in the way he plans things. Though there may be instances which contradict this, but largely he is unsystematic. He is very casual about his behavior, about his actions. He is open minded to certain extent in the sense that he listens to his loyal and particularly his sister. When he comes to know that it was Maximus who was the gladiator in the arena, instead of have him killed he lets him go as

people liked Maximus. He adapts himself to the situation and changes the course of his decisions.

### **The Matrix:**

Neo:

Neo is shown as a young geek who is looking for the ultimate answer to the question " What is the Matrix?". He is not someone who has many friends and is kind of a recluse. Judging him by his room and place where he lives, it appears he is very disorganized. He also seems a little confused about all that is going around him.

Taking an MBTI profile on Neo would put him in ISTP. These are not the characteristics of most leaders. Neo is not a leader in the true sense, rather its Morpheus. Neo is chosen to lead people, but Morpheus leads Neo into doing that.

Introversion: Neo is introvert. He does not seem to have too many interests. His main obsession is computers and hacking and he pursues these interests in depth. He is not very social and does not meet people unless he wants to for his needs.

Neo is not very open to communication. He seems very private and drawn to inner world. He is confused with all that is going around him and still does not discuss that with many people. He comes to the office late on a regular basis, showing he is not very attuned to the external environment.



**Sensing:** Though Neo is not quite oriented to the present realities, but he is factual and concrete. He observes and remembers the specifics. When Trinity (Carrie Moss) meets him for the first time in the nightclub, he immediately remembers that she was the one who cracked the IRS database long time ago. He carefully builds towards conclusions and trusts only experience. When Morpheus tells him about the Matrix, he doesn't believe it. He only believes when he actually experiences similar programs like Matrix.

**Thinking:** As Neo is a computer geek and a hacker, we can infer to certain extent that he is very analytical in thinking. He solves problems by logic and questioning assumptions. When Morpheus tells him about the Matrix, he questions and argues about the role of humans, machines etc. Although Neo is of the thinking type, but sometimes he follows his beliefs without reason. This is very clear when he goes back into Matrix to save Morpheus. He knows there is very little chance to save Morpheus, but only because he believed he could save Morpheus, he went in.

**Judging:** When asked by Morpheus "Do you believe in fate?", Neo replies "No, because I don't like the idea that I am not in control of my life". This essentially shows that Neo likes to be in control of his life. He has things planned for him, but due to certain unanswered questions he is not able to plan beyond a certain point. Though his room is not clean and organized and he lives in a shabby place, but deep inside he is very methodical.

**Morpheus:**

Morpheus is a thinker and a leader in the true sense. He knows how to

liberate his people but does not have the means to do it. He is highly  
<https://assignbuster.com/review-of-both-gladiator-and-the-matrix-essay-sample/>

respected by his team and seen as a father. He values honesty, and this is evident from the fact that Trinity advises Neo to be honest when he meets Morpheus. Morpheus also trusts his people and he is very rational and focused.

The MBTI profile of Morpheus would be ESTJ. The profile is explained in detail below.

**Extraversion:** Morpheus is an extrovert. This is seen by the way he makes his decisions. He is extremely expressive and honest. He likes to be around people and we rarely see him in the movie alone. He thinks aloud in the sense that he makes future strategies by discussing with his team mates and is open to suggestions.

**Sensing:** Morpheus is extremely oriented to present realities. He knows what he has to do to save his people. He builds carefully on what he observes and experiences and then draws conclusions.

**Thinking:** Guided by personal values, Morpheus sacrificed himself to save Neo, only who could save his people. He did not worry about his life and was very rational in thinking. He thought of the outcome and not the means to achieve it.

**Judging:** Morpheus is an extremely organized person. He is extremely confident about what he speaks. Judging by the way he speaks, it appears that he is very systematic person who has planned out the entire role of Neo. He believes in the prophecy of oracle and prepares Neo for the future battle with the machines.

**Ideas expressed in the film**

I think the positive idea in both the films is that a person alone cannot accomplish everything. He can be extremely good at something, but deep inside he is still unaware of his true capabilities. This unconscious competence is present in every person and one needs to do a lot of introspection to realize that. It is very clearly evident in Matrix (Neo is made aware of his potential by Morpheus).

**Takeaways and Insights**

Watching these movies, I felt that leadership not just something which few people are born with. Every person is a leader in some sense or the other. Leaders are born out of circumstances and each and every individual has the capability to be a leader. There can be various types of leaders, for example Morpheus, who is basically shows his people direction and depends on Neo to take it further and the other is Commodus who is not very liked but still is the ruler clearly evident.

**References:**

- Review of both Gladiator and The Matrix - Assignment Example
- Gladiator vs The Matrix — Digital Spy
- SparkNotes: The Matrix Trilogy

**Read next:**

How does the director of East is East Capture The interest of the audience in the opening sequence