



The first supervisor of the Space Division, Dr. Richard B. Kershner (1913–1982), was an inspiring and charismatic leader who became the driving force in organizing and managing the success of the Transit program. A gifted Hopkins mathematician, he served from 1959 through 1978 and was instrumental in shaping the culture of the Space Department. Some of his ideas on research and development management can be found in an earlier issue of the Technical Digest. Kershner’s many insightful, sometimes mordant, aphorisms are still recited with reverence throughout the Department. Here are some adages, collected from several colleagues:*

- On being well prepared for the improbable: “Give yourself a chance to get lucky.”
- On meeting tight delivery schedules: “We have plenty of time if we work fast enough.”
- On decision making in fast-paced projects: “All decisions are final, until revised.”
- On considering improbable solutions to apparent problems: “Nothing beats some things all to hell.”
- On optimizing multipurpose designs: “I only know one thing that does two things well, and it took God to invent it.”
- On mismanaging simple tasks: “The job was so simple that an idiot could do it, so they gave it to an idiot to do.”
- On grumbling by a staff member in accepting an assignment: “Cheerfulness is not a prerequisite.”
- On his career at APL: “A successful life is achieved by arranging to be paid for doing what you dearly love to do.”

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*Kershner, R. B., “The Arcane Art of Research and Development Management,” *Johns Hopkins APL Tech. Dig.* 2, 45–49 (1981).