

“Dare to be.... and stop micromanaging”

Micromanaging is one of the most unpleasant traits any manager can have, and the worst thing about it is that the majority of people do not even know that they are doing it. If you are a manager, the first thing that you need to do is to work out if your management style is correct. In this guide, we will look at why micromanagement is a poor use of time and how to stop.

What is Micromanaging?

Micromanaging is when a manager constantly oversees every single stage of any work that they delegate to their staff. Micromanagement is always pedantic and while sometimes it may be required with newer staff members, it is often negative because instead of teaching the staff member you end up doing the majority of the work for them.

Why is Micromanagement seen as Bad?

A manager should always be a leader. Furthermore, a manager will more often than not be one of the most experienced members of a team, which means that they should be doing some of the more important work. When micromanaging, two people are essentially doing the work of one, which is a waste of time.

Those who are being micromanaged will often feel singled out, even if this is the manager's style. Micromanagers are usually seen as narcissists, and this means that staff members who should have respect for their superiors will eventually lose any liking for them as well. As all staff members will know, workplaces that have staff members who do not like each other will be less effective than happy workplaces.

What are the Effects of Micromanagement?

Staff members who are being micromanaged will feel like their superiors have no confidence in them, which will destroy self-confidence. Furthermore, as the majority of managers cannot see an issue, they may make a member of staff feel like they are being singled out without even realising

it. In the most severe cases, staff members may feel like they are being bullied, and this can cause them to leave or file a complaint.

5 Tips To Stop Micromanagement

Stopping micromanagement early on is important. This requires both the attention of the manager and other staff members. As a manager you should always take a step back and analyse your style. If you think that you are micromanaging, it is your responsibility to find a way to improve your management style. If you do ask for the opinion of your staff members, you must take everything that they say into account and more importantly not take their comments personally.

- I. **Remember you're a leader first, expert second.** When you coach your team members to best apply their knowledge and skills, you're leading. After all, they are experts too. You don't need to have all the answers. Shift from being an expert to an expert leader of people. The most difficult change for first time managers is to learn to value managerial work rather than tolerate it. They must believe that making time for others is a necessary task and their responsibility.

- II. **Keep to the what, not the how.** As a leader it's your job to assign a problem or task (what has to be done) by clearly describing the desired outcome and all the parameters or constraints that your employees need to work within (e.g., scope, timing, resources, decision-making authority, internal politics). Your team members need to process the information you provide and explore ideas to determine the best course of action. Let them apply their creativity and expertise.

Advance planning is a way to keep to these boundaries: by thoroughly planning the what - all the background information - team member have all they need to know to be successful. It's much easier to let the employee own how the work that gets done. Advance planning and clarification helps avoid a common mistake where the managers thinks that they're being clear about what they want only to find that they're not. When their team member says 'I get it,' they don't always. It's a frustrating situation for the manager and the employee. Working on the wrong things when you think you're working on the right things is incredibly demotivating."

- III. **Provide context.** Employees also need to understand why their assignment is critical; people want to be part of something bigger. That connection to customer and organizational benefits

motivates them to do their best work. In addition, when employees understand the business context they make better decisions.

- IV. **Ask open-ended questions and listen.** Since you're not directing employees on the how of a task, you need to explore ideas with them. And despite your best intentions you might find yourself talking a lot about your ideas. To avoid this ask open-ended questions. Tell yourself, 'let me stop my mouth, ask a question, and then listen.' Your team member will immediately re-engage. It doesn't have to be an awkward situation.
- V. **Know when to tell.** There are times when there may not be a lot of options or room for new ideas. If there are regulations that restrict the solution or you're faced with a situation where you absolutely must be directive, don't waste your team member's time exploring ideas. As a leader you need to ask when you can, but tell when you have to.

Summary

Micromanaging is a loss for the organization, a frustration for employees, and a waste of your time as a leader. So remember that the best way to achieve results may not actually be your way.

About the author:

Leigh Dorling is passionate about helping businesses succeed and he developed <http://www.CreateYourMessage.com> as a fun way to produce motivational posters for his clients and to aid them create powerful reminders of values, vision, beliefs and goals. He also runs <http://www.cognisi.co.uk> where he helps business leaders achieve their goals more quickly than they will do themselves.