

The (possibly) Misintentioned Micromanager

Description

“Never tell people how to do things. Tell them what to do and they will surprise you with their ingenuity.”

General George Patton, U.S. Army

[Tweet](#)

Speaking with a friend this week who is unhappy in their new job, prompted me to reflect on the incredibly negative impact that micromanagement can have on high performing and autonomous employees. Then I got to thinking about the micromanagers I have coached in the workplace; many of whom were well intentioned, and oblivious to the harm they were doing. In fact, the micromanagement was often a result of a caring person, who had been poorly (or never) developed to be a leader, giving their best effort. It's a shame when a passionate, creative and talented mid-level manager (Director title in my friend's case) is already looking for new jobs within their first 6 months with a new organization because of micromanagement. Well-developed leaders understand that the key is to hire talented high performing professionals with a diverse set of skills and abilities and then give them the room to use their expertise with some autonomy.

I imagine we've all seen the two sides of this spectrum. I myself have had “leaders” who were so hands off I have to use quotes around the word as I type it and when reporting to them, I often wondered if they remembered they were supposed to be my boss. The other end of this spectrum is the micromanager. Ego-forward, micromanagers want to control each detail down to the direction in which the t is crossed. (ok, maybe not literally). Most times, managers become *micromanagers* when they direct not only the results of a project, but the *methods* their direct reports use to get those results. The ultimate goal is for leaders to live in the sweet spot of this spectrum, where they are capable of giving their team members the autonomy they need to direct their own work and thrive, to see the results of their efforts; and also, these leaders are present offering regular feedback, coaching, support and development.

If you suspect you might be a misintentioned micromanager, ask yourself- *how is this actually hindering my employees rather than helping?*

And if you are an intentional micromanager, please stop. Challenge the why behind your intentions. Either way, reach out. I'd be happy to coach you through this evolution that I promise: you, your employees, and your organization desperately need.

Category

1. Leadership

Date Created

2022/03/13

default watermark