

# THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 519 Mark Cuban, Me, and Micromanaging

I've often said I'm not a fan of micromanaging, but I'm also not a fan of being unhappily surprised by things I should have known if I had been paying more attention to what workers were doing. There needs to be a balance, right? I'm Jerry Roberts and today, Dallas Mavericks owner Mark Cuban might have found it for us. We'll find out next, on The Extra Point.

Two questions for you. Number one, how do you feel about being micromanaged by your boss? Number two, if you're a manager, how do you feel about being accused of it? We'll get to Mark Cuban's solution in a moment.

Until I figured out the true nature of micromanaging, I always saw it as a negative. A supervisor who was always over my shoulder, nitpicking about everything. Nothing I did was right. I so disliked the practice that I vowed I would never treat workers that way if I became a manager.

I was true to my word when I started a company over 25 years ago. I did not micromanage our workers. However, I took it to an extreme, giving people pretty much complete freedom. I hardly managed at all.

I hired people and more or less backed off to let them do their job, and wore that as some kind of badge of honor. Surely, these workers would prosper under this approach. Wrong. They didn't and that was a bit of a shock, an unwelcome shock because I thought I had it all figured out. My lack of supervision didn't help like I thought it would. People made mistakes, work slowed down, they didn't seem any happier — and I wasn't happy either.

It was clear I needed to be closer to the work so I began to hover over people and asked more questions. It wasn't long before someone suggested I was micromanaging. I didn't see it that way. Mark Cuban doesn't either. In 2014 he told Inc magazine, "I micromanage you

until I trust you." I absolutely agree with Cuban and that's what I was doing.

Cuban's plan was well thought out. He'd send emails and expect quick responses and direct action. Once the worker displayed the ability to produce results, Cuban inched away by requesting weekly reports. The better the outcome the less Cuban was involved but he didn't step away completely. He knew that he needed to have regular connections with his emerging talent if they were to enjoy more effective development.

In my case I'd tell workers, "As soon as you prove to me you can get the job done without my involvement, I'm outa here."

I let them know I'd still be available to help if they needed me, but that I trusted them and had other things to do.

As a strategy, this played out better because I left the decision on how much of me a worker would get totally up to them. You don't want me hovering at all, fine, show me you've got everything under control. Easy-peasy.

The key to success with this method is you talk it out with people and let them know how they have the power to control the situation. Their performance will be the deciding factor. If you and your team are at odds over micromanaging, maybe this is an approach that would help smooth things out.

That's The Extra Point. Get out there and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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