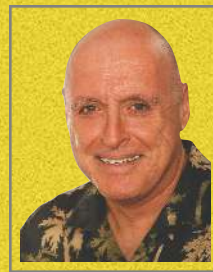


# The Extra Point

BY JERRY ROBERTS



## # 1029 I Say YES to Micro-Managing

Every year there are a parade of surveys done on issues in the workplace, many of them focusing on what managers do wrong. There's a long list of these managerial sins, and in just about every survey I've ever seen, micro-managing is included. I'm Jerry Roberts, and what if I told you I favor it? I'll tell you why, next on The Extra Point.

If you're wondering if you heard correctly just prior to the commercial break, did I say that I was in favor of micro-managing the people I supervise?

It's true. Not only that, but I firmly believe you should do it, too. Let me explain.

Most workers want to be left alone to handle their jobs. Fine. Most workers don't want the boss — or anybody else for that matter — hanging around over their shoulder. I get it, no problem. Most workers want to feel like they're trusted to do what has to be done. Absolutely, I agree. I want all those things for everybody.

In addition, I want to be comfortable enough for each worker to have that kind of freedom as fast as possible. Wait a second, did I just make this conditional, that a manager's comfort is necessary in order not to micro-manage?

A number of years ago, I led a company that published a business magazine, conducted training sessions and leadership conferences as I do now, and also produced large-scale consumer events.

Due to the nature of the work in all three areas, it's fair to say that we lived on deadlines. Something was always due and we didn't have the luxury of being late.

We had a good team with low turnover, but we did lose workers to larger companies once in a while, or someone left the island, and we had to replace them.

Getting a new employee up to speed was a challenge in some cases, and deadlines didn't change because of it. Here's where I developed my view off micro-managing.

If I hired someone with significant experience in the job, that comfort level I referred to was high. I might check in on them to see how things were going, but I gave them room to do their thing.

However, if that new worker had less experience in the job, or none at all, then it was a different story. I'd have to be closer to the situation, so a costly mistake wasn't made. I approached them like this...

"I have confidence that you're going to be great in this position, but I need to hover and be over your shoulder for a while, until you and I both know you're in total control. Then, you won't even know I'm around. That said, I'll be right here if you need me. Fair enough?"

Nobody ever got upset with that. I gave the new hire clear indication that their performance would determine how long my micro-managing would last. I kept my word. When I knew they knew the job and could meet deadlines, I backed off.

So, let's break it down. What was accomplished with my so-called micro-managing?

(Con't.)

One, the individual understood the issue of deadlines, and that this was not negotiable. I had a full workload and then some, but I would spend time with them so they got their work done on time.

Two, I didn't hammer them with my presence. They did the work and I made corrections as I felt was necessary. I didn't get in their way, and I didn't do their work for them.

Three, and highly important, the worker clearly understood that it was entirely up to them how long my regular presence would be required. They would decide.

Four, when I "graduated" them into greater independence, it added a sense of confidence for them.

Five, it was a simple system they could use with the people on their team.

Micro-managing has long had a stereotypical bad rap. In my view, used correctly, it is a valuable tool that can make a difference.

That's the Extra Point. Be responsible and make something good happen today. For 93.3 and the Ray Gibson Show, I'm Jerry Roberts.

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