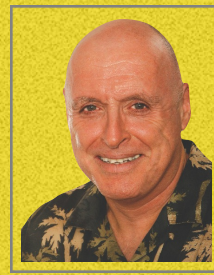


THE EXTRA POINT

BY JERRY ROBERTS



1291 How to Deal with a Micromanaging Boss

Every once in a while the issue of a manager being a micromanager comes up, and I feel the need to talk about a topic that really weighs on a lot of people. In my career, I have had to deal with micromanaging. I also decided to become a micromanager. Wait, wait, wait, before you judge, the reason I did might lead you to make the same decision. I'm Jerry Roberts, and today we look at this from several angles, That's next, on The Extra Point.

Let's talk about micromanagers. Before we get to stories, let's define the issue. A boss who is a micromanager will generally exhibit much of the following:

- They constantly check in on their employees, asking for updates on progress.
- Their focus is often on details, and not the big picture.
- They don't trust their employees' abilities and judgment. This often leads to constant double-checking of work and correcting minor errors before the work is finalized.
- A disregard for the ideas and opinions of workers.
- Absolute control. Micromanagers often have a strong need for control and may feel highly uncomfortable or anxious when they don't have it.
- They are usually inflexible. Micromanagers tend to have rigid expectations and may be resistant to change or new approaches.

This isn't a complete list of what workers have come to expect from micromanagers, but it serves our purpose for today.

Statistically speaking, you've probably worked for a micromanager. If you haven't yet, the odds are good that you will.

Now that we've identified what and who we're up against, how can we deal with all this?

The first choice is that you don't have to do anything at all. You can choose to suck it up and just live with it. This has never been my

choice, but it is a choice and a lot of people exercise it. The downside is when they tune the manager out and the relationship is affected. Worker enjoyment and high productivity are almost always enhanced by a strong and enjoyable relationship between the manager and the employee.

Another option, and one I've used, is not to ignore the micromanaging, but to address it directly:

"Hey boss, I can't help but notice that you've been hovering over me and my work lately. I get it, you want to be sure that I know what I'm doing. I promise you that I'm on top of the job, and I'll prove it to you. Give me some space to show that. If the work isn't to your standards, then you go ahead and hover over me all you want and I won't say another word. How's that?"

That worked for me, and the hovering stopped, at least stopped for me.

When I started a company, I was the farthest thing from a micromanager. I didn't want to be seen that way, so I gave everybody space, lots of space.

It wasn't a good strategy. My desire to avoid the label of micromanager resulted in me giving too much space at the beginning, and that led to numerous mistakes. I then changed course.

My new position was that I was going to be a micromanager, and I proudly announced that in a staff meeting. As you might expect, folks were looking around in a state of mild disbelief. "What did he say?" Then I explained.

I told them I would hover over them up until the moment they proved they could handle the work and didn't require my presence. I would still be available to support them if they did need me, but no more hovering.

(Con't.)

I further explained that my micromanaging was entirely up to them. Let me be clear, my version of micromanaging was never suffocating like it is with some managers.

Still, if they wanted me gone, all they had to do was prove that they could do the work. That was it. I had a ton of things to do, so I was happy to keep my word and focus on other work.

The last option is reserved for you if you work for a suffocating micromanager, and you've used hints and direct appeals, and nothing has worked.

You'll either have to accept who they are and live with it, try to transfer to another department, or look for another job. It's unfortunate when it comes to that, but at least the ultimate choice is yours.

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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