

Much Can Be Said about Micromanagement – None of It Good!

IT'S NOT UNCOMMON TO HEAR TEAM MEMBERS AND EVEN MANAGEMENT COMPLAIN ABOUT BEING MICROMANAGED.

For a club, that simply means the board and/or the GM/COO refuse to empower managers, supervisors, or team members to make independent decisions within the guidelines of club operating policy. This situation translates into lack of trust and stifles creativity that would otherwise stimulate member satisfaction.

Micromanagement relegates subordinates to the level of the furniture, and a chair does not care where it is placed or even how it is used.

When doing my research for the Master Club Manager designation in 2004, my area of study was *A Study of the General Manager Performance Evaluation Process*. It raised questions in my mind about micromanage-

ment and the attitudes managers hold on the matter.

In the survey, there was a question about compensation and micromanagement. Managers were asked to rate on a scale of 1 to 5 (where 1 was “strongly agree” and 5 was “strongly disagree”) the statement: *The higher my compensation package, the more willing I am to tolerate micromanagement from my board, committees, or members.* (See chart)

Regardless of compensation packages, the majority of managers indicated an aversion to being micromanaged. In a related question, 76 percent of general managers indicated they would not tolerate micromanagement. The response raises the question as to why 24 percent of the managers surveyed said they would accept micromanagement if the compensation were high enough.



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That, however, is not the only question that comes to mind. Others include:

- Were these respondents of the survey just honest about what they will do for money?
- Would these respondents be able to avoid getting bogged down in the micromanagement and still do their work?
- Would the quality of their work be exceptional?
- Would the team morale be high?
- Would there be a strong trust bond throughout the club?
- If the general manager/COO is micromanaged will they operate the property the same way, second-guessing themselves and others on a regular basis?
- Were these respondents answering solely on a hypothetical basis?
- And I ask myself...was this a fair question?

From the overwhelming response of managers who have low tolerance or no tolerance at all for Micromanagement, it's a fairly safe assumption that micromanagement is unhealthy and bad for the club. Why, then, does it still happen?

Is it because the board members have

HIGHER COMPENSATION - WILLINGNESS TO TOLERATE MICROMANAGEMENT

		FREQUENCY	PERCENT	VALID PERCENT	CUMULATIVE PERCENT
Valid	Strongly agree	1.3	7.8	8.6	8.6
	Agree	2.3	13.8	15.2	23.8
	Disagree	66	39.5	43.7	67.5
	Strongly disagree	49	29.3	32.5	100
	TOTAL	151	90.4	100	
Missing	No answer	7	4.2		
	Not applicable	9	5.4		
	TOTAL	16	9.6		
TOTAL		167	100		

not had a proper orientation and do not realize what their duties really are? It should be very clear – the board sets the policy; the GM/COO carries out the policy and manages the operations.

- Is it because the board or GM/COO made poor hiring choices and feel that they need to micromanage the individuals in place? It is wisely said, “Do not try to make up in training what you lacked in hiring.”

- Is it because the board or GM/COO only knows this style of management?

- Is the club managing to its objectives? Is there a clear plan in place? What are the levels of accountability throughout the club?

These are the real issues for moving the club forward, and micromanagement is one of the detractors that hold us back from achieving the club’s full potential.

Where micromanagement is not often being addressed within the club, negative energies reverberate on all levels. Is there an elephant in the room?

PREVENTATIVES FOR MICROMANAGEMENT

If there’s a formal performance evaluation system in place, which is tied to meeting goals and objectives, then any perceived stifling of initiative or micromanaging of the team by the GM/COO would be addressed using this tool, and a correction or a change would take place.

Also, if the club has a strong system in place, which includes a clear operations plan, which the board of directors has approved and the GM/COO and the team are accountable for, there is no need for any micromanagement.

It’s actually very simple. If the club cannot meet its objectives, there’s an issue, which needs to be addressed. If the club is meeting all objectives, then there’s no reason for the board to get involved in operations.

In the ideal situation, individuals who serve on boards of directors and the management team of any club will always have the same good and strong intention – to move the club forward.

Sometimes club operations just get so bogged down in the “busy-ness,” that the bigger picture gets overlooked, failing to realize how some lower level vibrations affect the overall good of the cause!

In an earthquake, houses get shaken at the foundation. The metaphor is appropriate for a club that crumbles under the debilitating effects of micromanagement. **BR**

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