

Micromanaging A Project

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Welcome back. I'm Kim Baillie, she's Fulyana Orsborn. This is Inside Exec and I'm laughing because I did the intro wrong. I've only done it 200 and 46 times and I got it wrong. So I'm going to have to keep doing it to get it right. Today, we're going to talk about protecting your personal status, your personal profile when you've handed over activities to a team to look after and you can't pull yourself away from micromanaging this activity. Now, this was a topic suggestion that came from me and Fulyana just in the discussion we had before we started, she said she understood the situation, but she didn't think that where it came from in terms of my experience related to normal people. As the conversation went on, we decided that people are normal and that this experience that we're going to talk about basically it's about micromanaging, it's micromanaging an activity that you might previously have looked after or previously supervised.

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But this one is going to reflect on your personal status. So you are an individual with a particular standing in some arena, whether it's private life or in your work life and you know that that standing profile that you have is important to you and your organization and obviously what you're worried about is that if this event is not managed the right way, that it will reflect on you and on the organization. And so because you've done it before, each time, each stage is reached, you think of what about this? What about that? And you don't allow the team or the individual that has been delegated to do this task this time

around to manage it in their way. So I think we heard of that, what might be driving you to micromanage? So in this case are you aware you're micromanaging? You need to step back and think yes I am. And once you see that you've got to figure out why am I doing this and how would someone working for me feel or the person leading this project, for example, I would be thinking, why are you micromanaging me?

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Don't you trust me? And if the answer is no, I don't, then let's deal with that and let's figure out why and fix that. If you think that you're going to come across as not trusting so you are the micro manager stop and think how would they feel, how might they feel? I don't trust them, that's not the reality of it. I do trust them. So then let them do it and let them do it their way. Yes. You've done a brilliant job in the past, that's not your job anymore. You are in a more senior role and you've got other responsibility. Yes. What you care about has to happen, it's your reputation, you're the manager, Yes, the organization's reputation too. But that's why you've got people, you've got to trust them to do their job and to do it their way. It does not mean if they're not doing it exactly as you have done it, that it's wrong, maybe it's better, you know, I mean, have you thought about that?

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Are they doing it? And I never thought about that initially, I feel uncomfortable and nervous about, you know, how it might go. But in essence, we found another way. Is that something I've got to think about? But the other thing is, why are you

micromanaging instead of leading? Why don't you face your expectation? What are you expecting to happen? What are the ground rules? What are the things that we must have in this project? What are the things that, you know, are negotiable etcetera? Because if you have that conversation, both parties will feel more comfortable. Both parties would know what I am expecting. What is the ultimate result? What's the timeline we're working with? What are the resources we need, what can we do or not do? Because everybody has limited resources. The other thing is when do they come to you? Instead of micromanaging as I said, lead, let them come to you, keep you informed.

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That will make you feel good. Resist the temptation to say yeah, but why didn't you? And could you let them do it and then just keep that helicopter view where they can come to you to bounce off. They come to you for mentoring rather than for direction and what you're doing is you're getting the satisfaction of meeting the ultimate objective of getting the right results and keeping your reputation. But guess what, you are bringing someone along or some of the team along to be independent, to get as proficient at doing this as you have done in the past, Where your leaders let you, remember that you would not have become so good at what you're doing if you weren't allowed, guided. Yes. Lead by leadership. Yes, so what can you do to help them do it without micromanaging?

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Yes, I want to keep in the loop but not every step of the way. I

want to know which direction. I want to be there to help them solve issues if they need to overcome obstacles, if something I have to negotiate up the line or sideways or whatever. That's where I can be of value rather than telling and dictating how to do it. So micromanaging actually achieves nothing other than confirming, yeah, we know you can do it so you do it then get rid of all the resources, you have saved money, do it yourself and it's not going to happen. That will not work because it needs more than one person. I think too, that we need to go back to some fundamentals with this activity and think about it as a project and as a project one of the best things that you can do is have a reporting structure. That's a reporting timeline that says, okay, this is the overall project, I asked the person doing the management of this, I'm going to report to you who, who did it in the past and he's not going to do it now, but he's overseeing it.

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I was worried about how it reflects on you. So I'm going to report to you every week at that meeting. I'm going to talk about these things. We'll agree that I'm going to talk about these things. If during that week you think of something else, don't call me when you think of it, write it down. So that at that regular update, we can go through your concerns or the things that you've thought about and you can see I can answer them and say, well, it's included in this that's done this or it's here or it's there and between us, we can see the plan, we can see how it's being managed and you don't need to worry about whether I thought about this or whether I've done that because I'm going to do it at this point in time. I have incorporated it here. And if that doesn't meet with what you would like to

happen or you're still concerned about it, we can talk about it then. But having that constant interruption causes less and less attention paid to the activity because the other person is always worried what's the next interruption going to be, what's the next thing they're going to think of?

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He thinks I haven't thought of it already and then that leads to frustration and that feeling that we talked about it enough, don't you trust me to do it. And so you become less and less committed to making that the best project that can be because you know or you feel that everything we do is going to be second guessed. So I think the fundamental thing is to set up a reporting structure to start with and a way, a method that the person who has the concerns can list them and share them with you at a time where you can both talk about them and work through them and see that the results or that they have been addressed or if they haven't been addressed, thanks for bringing that to my attention that I hadn't thought about, I will put it in this bucket to look after whatever it is. I'd like to put this in as well. I've mentioned it before about the fact that is doing it my way and doing it a different way. I always believe with that saying that says just because someone is on a different road to me, it does not mean they are lost.

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I could be saying, oh, the best way to go from A to B is this way and well that was the best one for me. What about another person going another way and what are the benefits of that? I shouldn't shut my ears and eyes to that. So it doesn't

mean they're lost, it means maybe they found even a better way. I know that over the last few podcasts I've referred to google a lot. But if you look at google maps, it doesn't just give you one way to go somewhere. Maybe it gives you alternatives. They might take longer. Sometimes there's this traffic, sometimes it's a more interesting drive, whatever it is, but driving aside, the fundamentals of our world, give us choices, then we should make sure that that's happening in the business arena as well. I think we've covered that for the time being. If you have instances where you have been micromanaged and you found a way to overcome that or if you in fact were the person that was micromanaging and you realize that and you or your team were able to address it, we would be very interested in hearing that and being able to share that with our listeners.

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But for now I'm Kim Baillie, she's Fulyana Orsborn, this is Inside Exec.