If you're like most managers, you've probably proclaimed at some point that you're not a micromanager. And that makes sense – hovering over your staff while they work, dictating how the smallest details should be done, or actually doing their work for them are all bad things that should be avoided. But it’s rarer for people to talk about the problems with the other extreme on that spectrum: being too hands-off when your team needs you to be more involved. That can be just as damaging as micromanaging, and yet it gets far less attention. In fact, many managers even brag about how hands-off they are with their team members – which isn’t always an effective style.

Here are four signs that your team needs you more involved than you currently are.

1. **When work is completed, it doesn't look like you wanted it to.** If you’re often surprised or frustrated that a work product doesn’t meet your expectations, take it as a flag that you’re either not delegating the work correctly at the beginning or not staying sufficiently involved along the way – and possibly both.

Taking the time to agree on expectations at the start of a project and then staying involved and checking in as the work progresses is what allows you to keep work on course, catch problems early, and course-correct if necessary. It’s also what makes it highly unlikely that you’ll be surprised by key details of a project at the end, and keeps your staff members from being frustrated when they need to go back and redo something because they didn’t get your input earlier on.

2. **You're not sure if team members know your assessment of their work (or you know for sure that they don't because you've never told them).** If you have an opinion about a team member’s work, good or bad, and that person doesn’t know it, you’re not communicating enough. That’s what leads top performers to feel unappreciated, mediocre employees to think they’re performing at a high level, and low performers not to be held accountable,
3. You don’t know if your employees are on track to meet their biggest goals. You might assume that they are and that they’ll tell you if they’re not on track to meet their goals, but a surprising number of people don’t proactively update their manager on this kind of thing – or update the manager much later than the manager would prefer. Plus, by not checking in about progress toward big goals, you’re signaling that you might not take those goals all that seriously.

At least quarterly, and in some cases monthly, you should be checking in with each staff member about their progress toward their biggest goals. You might also ask people to set interim milestones so you can both easily spot where projects are getting off course.

4. You’re not getting the results you want. If you’re not seeing the results that you want in a particular area of work or from a particular person, it’s time to get more closely involved so that you can get more insight into what’s happening on the ground, provide better coaching and direction, figure out what changes need to be made, and make sure they happen.

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