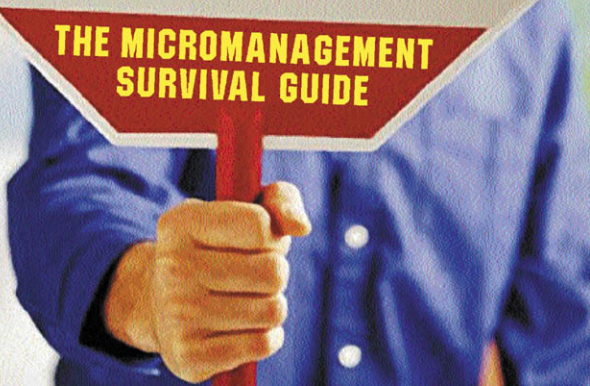


DON'T DO IT YOURSELF,  
DON'T TAKE IT FROM OTHERS

**HARRY E. CHAMBERS**

**MY WAY OR THE  
HIGHWAY**

**THE MICROMANAGEMENT  
SURVIVAL GUIDE**



An Excerpt From

***My Way Or the Highway:  
The Micromanagement Survival Guide***

by Harry E. Chambers

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# 1



## The Scope of Micromanagement

**J**ust about everyone can identify with the frustrations of being micromanaged. Whether it is their current situation or memories of past challenging experiences, most people believe that they have been under the thumb of someone who micromanages. The following chapters will help to determine whether those perceptions are valid, identify some of the reasons the micromanagement took place, and offer options for dealing with current and future situations.

Perceptions of being micromanaged are sometimes misinterpretations of fairly common circumstances:

- Disagreements
- Being subjected to the influence of others
- Misunderstandings
- Unwanted intrusions into your domain
- Being held accountable

For some people, being micromanaged is a self-fulfilling perception. They do not want to be managed, period! Any attempts to influence their activities or hold them accountable are seen as micro. While most of us have chafed under what we believe is “too close” influence over our activities, it does not necessarily mean that we were being micromanaged.

### **WHAT IS MICROMANAGEMENT?**

Micromanagement is all about interference and disruption. It occurs when influence, involvement, and interaction begin to subtract value from people and processes. It is the perception of inappropriate interference in someone else’s activities, responsibilities, decision making, and authority. It can also be any activity that creates interference with process, policies, systems, and procedures. Basically, micromanagement is the excessive, unwanted, counterproductive interference and disruption of people or things.

*Micromanagement* is a very subjective term. There is a significant gray area between what one person sees as interference and another sees as support and interaction. Participation, guidance, and collaboration, to some, are seen as meddling, manipulation, and excessive control by others. There is a large gap between the perception of the micromanagEE and the micromanagER.

When someone is accused of micromanaging, they often respond, “I’m not micromanaging . . .

*I'm only trying to help.*

*I'm only trying to be sure we're successful.*

*I'm sharing my experience and knowledge.*

*I'm just trying to make it easier.*

*I just want to know what's going on.*

*I'm only doing what is necessary to ensure success."*

In the past, we branded the scarlet letter A into people's foreheads who were accused of adultery. Today we tattoo an imaginary scarlet MM on the forehead of a manager and others when we don't like what they are doing. Statements such as "I'm being micromanaged" frequently really mean

*I don't like the style in which I'm being managed.*

*I don't like other team members messing in my stuff.*

*It's not fair when everyone doesn't agree with me.*

*I'm being managed, and I don't like it.*

*My boss isn't letting me have my way.*

*I have to be unhappy about something.*

*I don't like my manager.*

*Poor me.*

When we don't like something, we label and demonize it. "Micromanagement" has become the trendy, negative, overused label of choice. Just because someone is unhappy with the activity of others doesn't always mean he or she is being micromanaged. In today's workplace, with its ever-escalating tendencies toward whining, blaming, and avoiding

responsibility, for many, the statement “I am being micromanaged” is the grown-up equivalent to the eternal teenage lament of “My parents just don’t understand me.”

The people being blamed for micromanaging perceive that their interference is minimal if, in fact, it occurs at all. They do not see any problem. Most are shocked if they are openly accused of micromanaging.

The ability to deal with any micromanagement effectively is contingent upon our ability to reduce the gap of perception between the micromanager and the micromanager. We have to shrink and lighten the areas of gray!

***Question:***

When do participation, collaboration, and oversight become micromanagement?

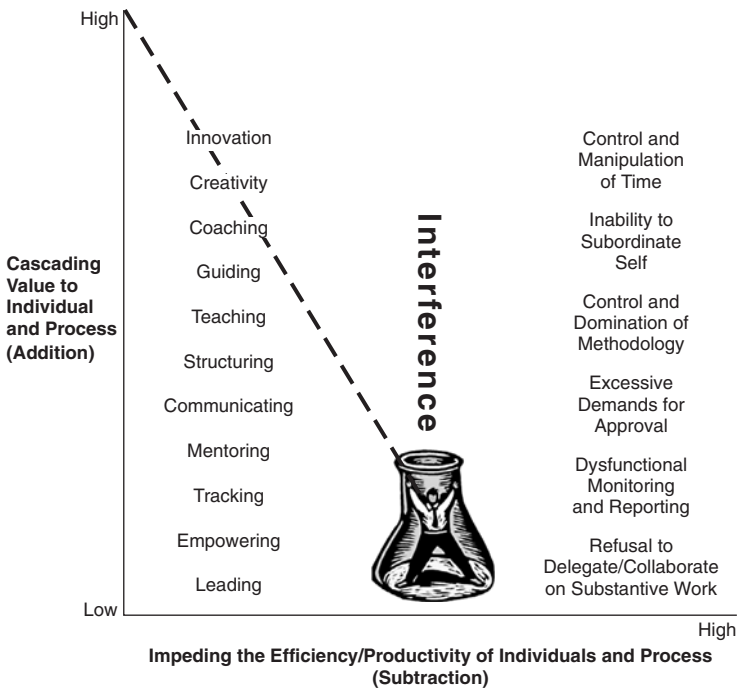
***Answer:***

When they interfere with performance, quality, and efficiency. When they become barriers to achievement, or impediments to getting things done. Micromanagement and micromangers do not add value to individuals or processes. Regardless of the intent, the results are subtraction, not addition.

Figure 1.1 depicts the transition from adding value to individuals and process toward interference by impeding the efficiency and productivity of individuals and process.



**Figure 1.1** The Micromagement Cascade



The positive contributions such as

innovation

communicating

creativity

mentoring

coaching

tracking

guiding

empowering

teaching

leading

structuring

give way to

manipulation of time	dominance of self
control of methodology	excessive demands for approval
excessive monitoring and reporting	dysfunctional delegation/collaboration

The gap between the perceptions of the micromanager and the micromanagee is the breeding ground for misunderstanding, morale problems, high frustration, and declining productivity. The broader the gap, the less job satisfaction there is for everyone involved.

The most important factor in dealing with micromanagement and neutralizing its negative impact is to discover precisely when the interference and disruption occurs. Without this discovery, the disconnect in the perceptions of micromanagement will be never-ending. The more accurate and timely the discovery, the quicker and more effectively the damage and debilitating costs of micromanagement can be reduced.

### **WHAT MICROMANAGEMENT ISN'T**

Micromanagement is not abusive management. Behaviors such as temper tantrums, ridicule, public embarrassment, talking behind people's back, inappropriate language, disciplining to punish, intentional untruths, prejudice, deceit, biased performance appraisals, intentional disrespect, demand of blind loyalty, and other similar demonstrations are the realm of abusers, not people who micromanage.

Most micromanagers are well intended and have no interest in demeaning or abusing others.

## **THE COSTS OF MICROMANAGEMENT**

The negative impact of micromanagement permeates to at least four areas: (1) the organization, (2) the micromanager, (3) the micromanager, and (4) the customer.

### ***To the Organization***

- Retention problems
- Increased levels of unresolved conflict
- Excessive tardiness and absenteeism
- Failure to correct internal deficiencies
- Reduced quality/process improvement
- An increase in lawsuits
- Higher resistance to change initiatives
- Escalations of formal employee complaints

### ***The Micromanager***

- Career stagnation
- Diminished responsiveness
- Becoming a bottleneck
- Increased turnaround/cycle
- Lower productivity from others

- Becoming an impediment to change
- Lack of support/allies
- Personal exposure

### ***The MicromanagEE***

- Low morale
- Absence of risk taking
- Lower job satisfaction
- Perceived lack of value
- Diminished initiative and creativity
- Boredom
- Decreased commitment
- Increased resentment

### ***The Customer***

- Diminished service levels
- Inflexible policies, procedures, and restraints
- Slow response
- Not being listened to
- Problems lacking priority
- Unnecessary costs due to inefficiencies
- Lack of innovation on “new” offerings
- Loss of individuality/uniqueness/value

## THE TWO TIERS OF MICROMANAGEMENT

To enhance our understanding further, it is also appropriate to look at the environment in which micromanagement flourishes. There are two important factors to consider: organizational culture and individual style.

### *Organizational Culture*

Some organizations embed micromanagement behaviors as their normal process of doing business. Typically this behavioral standard is set at the top of the organization and cascades downward as it infects every level. If top leadership demonstrates micromanagement behaviors and reinforces those behaviors in others, micromanagement becomes both the norm and a mimicked style of choice. Managers, would-be managers, and staff-level employees all learn that the way to get ahead around here and keep the peace is to be just like the boss!

Another cultural factor worth mentioning is the emphasis placed on management and staff development. When managers and leaders are not effectively trained in the skills necessary to lead others, or when employees are not trained to work collaboratively, there is a consistent and predictable tendency to gravitate toward the controlling behaviors of micromanagement. Unfortunately, one of the primary reasons that micromanagement has become so prevalent is because people have not been trained to do it differently. Micromanagement becomes the style of default.

### ***Individual Style***

Individuals can also move toward micromanagement regardless of the organizational culture. Highly collaborative, interactive team environments can have micromanaging individuals. Even the most enlightened organizations can have individuals whose tendency it is to micromanage other individuals and situations. For some it is a behavior of choice; for many it is both a lack of awareness and training.

In today's workplace, micromanaging individuals are becoming more and more negatively visible.

## **THE MICROMANAGEMENT SURVEY**

How pervasive is the problem of micromanagement?

In a survey conducted by Trinity Solutions, Inc., Peachtree City, Georgia and independently administered by Katherine M. Wilson, Ph.D., we learned from respondents that

79% have experienced micromanagement from their current or past managers.

Of respondents who currently identified themselves as managers (supervisors, team leaders, middle managers, executives):

27% said they are currently being micromanaged by their manager;

71% said they had been micromanaged by previous managers;

62% stated they had considered changing jobs because of being micromanaged;

32% stated they had actually changed jobs because of being micromanaged;

73% said that being micromanaged has interfered with their job performance;

77% said their morale has been impacted negatively by being micromanaged;

19% stated they were currently being micromanaged by others (not someone they report to directly);

47% stated they have been micromanaged by others in the past.

Of respondents who currently identified themselves as nonmanagers:

37% said they are currently being micromanaged by their manager;

67% said they have been micromanaged by previous managers;

69% stated they have considered changing jobs because of being micromanaged;

36% stated they have actually changed jobs because of being micromanaged;

71% said that being micromanaged has interfered with their job performance;

85% said their morale has been impacted negatively by being micromanaged;

23% stated they are currently being micromanaged by others (not someone they report to directly);

53% stated they have been micromanaged by others in the past.

The disconnect:

22% of managers acknowledge currently demonstrating some of the micromanagement behaviors;

48% of managers acknowledge having demonstrated these behaviors in the past;

38% of nonmanagers acknowledge demonstrating some of the micromanagement behaviors either currently or in the past;

91% of managers are unaware of employees changing jobs because of their micromanagement style and behaviors.

What can we learn from the survey?

- Micromanagement is pervasive.
- Both managers and nonmanagers experience it.
- Managers and nonmanagers alike demonstrate the behaviors.
- People change jobs because of it.
- Productivity is reduced because of it.
- Morale is negatively impacted because of it.
- Few people think they are doing it.



- Most people are oblivious to the negative impact their micromanagement behaviors have on others.
- Over a third of managers believe it is what their organization wants them to do.
- Most people think everyone else is doing it, *but not them.*

### The Micromanagement Survey Results/ Specific Behaviors

The following responses are ranked in order of affirmative responses.

#### ■ *Have you experienced these micromanagement behaviors from managers?*

BEHAVIOR	MANAGERS' RANKING	NONMANAGERS' RANKING
1. Control over methodologies or "how" things are done	1	1
2. Unnecessary/excessive requirements for approvals	3	2
3. Exercise of raw power/imposing their will	5	3
4. Dominance and control over time	2	4
5. Excessive monitoring and reporting	4	5

■ *Have you experienced these micromanagement behaviors in peers, team members, or other nonmanagers?*

BEHAVIOR	MANAGERS' RANKING	NONMANAGERS' RANKING
1. Refusal to collaborate	1	1
2. Dominance and control over time	2	2
3. Control over methodologies or "how" things are done	3	3
4. Having to win	5	4
5. Incomplete sharing of information	4	5

### WHY DOES MICROMANAGEMENT OCCUR?

People who are perceived to be micromanaging are typically judged harshly. They are believed to be control freaks lacking trust and confidence in others. Their behaviors are assumed to be rooted in insecurity and arrogance. The behavior patterns of micromanagers seem to imply that

they believe they are smarter and more capable than those around them, and

they must keep a close eye on everyone else to ensure that things are done correctly.

Although these perceptions may have some legitimacy, they are often simplistic, knee-jerk attempts at criticizing and labeling behaviors that we find uncomfortable. The vast majority of time micromanagement is shrouded in unawareness (as our survey indicated). For some, it may be a conscious disregard for how their behaviors impact others. If so, it is an expensive disregard with the toll on productivity and morale. Invest your efforts in addressing the behaviors of micromanagement, and avoid getting bogged down in petty, self-serving labeling. We all demonstrate the behaviors to some degree, but when we do it, it is certainly not due to insecurity, arrogance, or a pathological need to exercise control.

Those who micromanage are not bad people with diabolical intentions. In some cases, it is learned behavior that has been successful in the past. Often people do not know how to influence others successfully without becoming “micro” in their attempts. In the absence of training and development, we all tend to mimic the past behaviors of those who seemed to be successful. Many of today’s unacceptable micromanagement behaviors are, in actuality, remnants of the encouraged behaviors of past autocratic, authoritarian environments.

The focus of this book is how to reduce our own micromanagement behaviors and respond effectively to those behaviors in others. To broaden our understanding, it is appropriate to look at some of the root causes of these behaviors.

## A FORMULA FOR CAUSES OF MICROMANAGEMENT

The actual root causes of micromanagement can be displayed in a formula:

$$\mathbf{Mm} = \mathbf{Fr} + \mathbf{Cm} + \mathbf{Cf}$$

In other words: Micromanagement = Fear + Comfort + Confusion.

All three components contribute to micromanagement. For some people, it is a blend of all three; others may be influenced by only one or two of the root causes. All are the drivers of micromanagement. Many of these factors will be discussed in greater depth in succeeding chapters.

### ***Fear***

The behaviors of micromanagement are strongly influenced by fear. In fact, much of micromanagement is an attempt to avoid a possible negative outcome. This may be a specific, clearly identified fear or a general foreboding that things could potentially “go wrong.” The fear may be targeted inward toward self or externally toward others. Others interpret the micromanager’s behaviors as an indication of low trust and perception of incompetence in them.

---

★ ***Fear is a powerful motivator of behavior.***

---

Some of the fear factors contributing to micromanagement are as follows:

- Lack of confidence in personal ability to influence others
- Potential failure of others
- Public embarrassment or being made to look bad
- Being left out of the loop
- Loss of recognition or credit for achievement
- Loss of influence over the final outcome
- Irrelevance
- Territorial infringement
- Threat of others' competence

### ***Comfort***

In many circumstances, it is just plain easier to micromanage. It is comfortable to continue to do things the way you have always done them and disregard input from others. Change causes discomfort.

It is easier and more comfortable to correct and direct others than it is to correct and direct self. Often people who want to give advice to others on how to lead their lives, or do their jobs, or fix their problems are those whose personal situations are in chaos. Did you ever notice how easy it is to quit somebody else's job, divorce somebody else's mate, or tell somebody else what he or she should do to be successful? People who micromanage avoid the risk of self-accountability by submerging themselves in the activities of others.

★ ***For some micromanagers, it is more comfortable and fun to be on a controlling power trip.***

---

Comfort has many factors, including these:

- Self-reliance (If you want it done well, do it yourself.)
- Lack of patience
- The illusion of activity (It is easier to look busy than it is to be truly effective.)
- Risk avoidance
- Exercise of raw power (Some people control and micromanage because they can!)
- Familiarity of crisis, escalated stress, and increased pressure
- Lack of flexibility (Rigidity is easy. Flexibility, accepting change, and considering exceptions to policies and procedures are often uncomfortable.)

### ***Confusion***

Confusion reigns when priorities, objectives, and goals are not clearly identified, communicated, or accurately comprehended. Confusion creates unfocused activity or inactivity; in some cases, it freezes people in place. People who

micromanage are quick to step in and fill any perceived void. They believe their activity is necessary to gain order and stability. Confusion provides many people with an open invitation to micromanage.

Interestingly, this is a chicken-and-egg situation. Micromanagers are not clear in establishing roles, responsibilities, accountability, and expectations; thus, they create the confusion. They then intensify their micromanagement behaviors to correct a problem of their own creation. Talk about a lose/lose situation! They contribute to confusion and then feel compelled to “fix it.”

Often micromanagers hire the “best and brightest,” yet they do not allow these people to be the best and brightest. The cause is frequently due to unclear roles and responsibilities, coupled with a reluctance to give them the authority. How can people do well that which they do not know to do?

People who micromanage cannot tell you what they actually want, yet they can tell you what they don't. They can tell you what it isn't, but not what it is. While they cannot really clarify their expectation, they will just know it when they see it.

---

**★ *Confusion reigns when the criteria for judging progress and outcomes is not clear.***

---

Here are some typical examples of confusion:

- Failure to enable authority (Responsibility and accountability without authority)
- Lack of clearly defined outcomes/expectation
- An unawareness of shifts in priorities and deadlines
- No mechanisms for evaluating progress
- Failure to communicate “why”
- Decisions without explanation
- Lack of clear problem diagnosis

Fear, comfort, and confusion stimulate the behaviors of micromanagement. They also provide validation and justification for those who micromanage.

### **ARE YOU A MICROMANAGER?**

The following indicator was developed by Trinity Solutions, Inc. The indicator is offered to help participants determine their own potential for demonstrating the behavior of micromanagement.

The value of this instrument is determined by your honesty. Please do not select the socially desirable answer. Choose the response that accurately describes you.



**The Micromanagement Potential Indicator**

Please select an “a” or “b” response for each statement.  
Choose the statement that best applies to you.

---

1. I prefer a work environment that is
  - a. Structured
  - b. Unstructured
2. My work relationships tend to be
  - a. Formal
  - b. Informal
3. I offer input on how others can best utilize their time
  - a. Frequently
  - b. Infrequently
4. The phrase that best describes me is
  - a. “Gotta win”
  - b. “Doing the best I can”
5. My thoughts and comments about the work of others tend to be
  - a. Critical
  - b. Not critical
6. The phrase that best describes me is
  - a. “Hate to lose”
  - b. “Doing the best I can”
7. I prefer others to
  - a. Follow directions
  - b. Exercise creativity
8. I need others to
  - a. Keep me informed
  - b. Work independently
9. People work better when
  - a. Closely monitored
  - b. Trained and empowered

**The Micromanagement Potential Indicator** *(continued)*

Please select an “a” or “b” response for each statement.  
Choose the statement that best applies to you.

---

10. In making decisions, I want people to
- |                                  |  |
|----------------------------------|--|
| a. Seek my guidance/<br>approval | b. Act on their own<br>and keep me<br>informed |
|----------------------------------|--|
11. In completing tasks, I want people to
- |                            |  |
|----------------------------|--|
| a. Follow existing methods | b. Create methods<br>that are best for<br>them |
|----------------------------|--|
12. Meetings are
- |  |                                     |
|--|-------------------------------------|
| a. Essential to good<br>communication and<br>performance | b. Effective only when<br>necessary |
|--|-------------------------------------|
13. I think others perceive that I share information
- |                        |                    |
|------------------------|--------------------|
| a. Only when necessary | b. Open and freely |
|------------------------|--------------------|
14. I break the rules or ignore policy
- |                        |          |
|------------------------|----------|
| a. Only when necessary | b. Never |
|------------------------|----------|
15. When my expectations are unmet, I typically react
- |                     |                        |
|---------------------|------------------------|
| a. Strongly/vocally | b. Passively/ silently |
|---------------------|------------------------|
16. I consider myself a change agent
- |        |       |
|--------|-------|
| a. Yes | b. No |
|--------|-------|
17. I think other people perceive my attitude toward change as
- |              |              |
|--------------|--------------|
| a. Accepting | b. Resisting |
|--------------|--------------|

18. When my duties and responsibilities have been changed, I
  - a. Welcome the challenge
  - b. Feel like I am being punished
19. I like to do things
  - a. My way
  - b. In accordance with policies and procedures
20. I typically view change as
  - a. Gain
  - b. Loss
21. I think others see me as
  - a. Unpredictable
  - b. Predictable
22. I tend to
  - a. Discard things easily
  - b. Be a pack rat
23. Tradition and consistency are
  - a. Nice
  - b. Very important to me
24. My attitude toward a lateral move would be
  - a. Willing to consider
  - b. Doubtful . . . why move laterally?
25. When asked to do something I don't agree with, I
  - a. Disregard my own perceptions and follow through
  - b. Think it's unfair and try to change the task
26. I change my appearance
  - a. Often
  - b. Rarely
27. Change is necessary
  - a. Less for me
  - b. More for everyone else

**The Micromanagement Potential Indicator** *(continued)*

Please select an “a” or “b” response for each statement.  
Choose the statement that best applies to you.

---

28. When I am threatened by something, I  
a. Speak out to address it      b. Remain quiet and  
internalize my  
feelings
29. People who drive change are my  
a. Ally      b. Adversary
30. I tend to be  
a. Creative      b. Consistent
31. People who see things differently than I do are  
a. Misguided      b. Interesting
32. I prefer to work  
a. Independently      b. In teams/with others
33. When others offer comments concerning my tasks,  
responsibilities, and performance, I  
a. Tolerate them      b. Welcome them
34. If a task can be shared or assigned to others, I would  
rather  
a. Do it myself      b. Teach others to  
do it
35. If you want something done right  
a. Do it yourself      b. Invite others' input  
and creativity

36. When others need help, I typically
- a. Encourage them to seek help from others
  - b. Offer assistance myself
37. In a situation of potential delegation, I
- a. Usually think it's quicker to do it myself
  - b. Consider it an opportunity to help others grow and develop
38. I can achieve more
- a. Working on my own
  - b. Working in concert with others
39. My attitude regarding working in teams or in groups is
- a. "A camel is a racehorse designed by a committee"
  - b. "None of us is as smart as all of us"
40. I would rather win an Olympic gold medal in
- a. An individual event
  - b. A team sport
41. If given the opportunity to assign tasks to others, I would initially give away
- a. Tasks I was bored with or didn't like
  - b. Tasks that others could perhaps do better
42. I would rather
- a. Write a best-selling novel
  - b. Direct an Academy Award-winning movie
43. I think other people would describe my working style as
- a. Solitary
  - b. Interactive

**The Micromanagement Potential Indicator** *(continued)*

Please select an "a" or "b" response for each statement.  
Choose the statement that best applies to you.

---

44. When others in my group or team do not support my ideas, my first reaction is to
- a. Withhold support of their ideas (an eye for an eye)      b. Seek common ground
45. My interpretation of the 80/20 rule would be
- a. 80% of the work is done by 20% of the people      b. 80% of what I do could be done by others
- 

**SCORING THE MICROMANAGEMENT INDICATOR*****Section I (Questions 1 through 15)***

Please count your responses for the first fifteen statements.

"a" Totals \_\_\_\_\_

"b" Totals \_\_\_\_\_

***Section II (Questions 16 through 30)***

Please do the same for the next fifteen statements.

"a" Totals \_\_\_\_\_

"b" Totals \_\_\_\_\_

***Section III (Questions 31 through 45)***

Please do the same for the last fifteen statements.

"a" Totals \_\_\_\_\_

"b" Totals \_\_\_\_\_

## **DETERMINING THE MEANING**

### ***Section I: Control Factors***

Control factors have to do with your preference for being in control and having others be responsive to you. This reflects the tendency to exercise active, overt influence over people and tasks.

More than eight “a” scores in this grouping indicate a tendency toward exercising significant control and influence. This figure may indicate the potential to micromanage tasks and people.

Eleven or more “a” responses in this grouping would indicate a high probability of current micromanagement behaviors. There is a great likelihood that others may perceive you to have a definite need to exercise unnecessary control.

Seven or fewer “a” responses would indicate that the potential for micromanaging is less likely.

### ***Section II: Familiarity Factors***

Familiarity factors have to do with the preference for consistency, the status quo, or low to moderate change environments.

People with eight or more “b” scores in this grouping prefer consistency. They are less likely to initiate change and more likely to move slowly in the face of change. This would indicate the potential to demonstrate a significant level of micromanagement behaviors, especially in maintaining familiar methods and historical patterns.

Eleven or more “b” responses in this grouping would indicate a high probability of micromanaging behaviors. There is a strong likelihood that others may perceive you to be inflexible and unresponsive to others creativity and initiative taking.

Seven or fewer “b” responses would indicate that the tendency toward micromanaging is less likely.

### ***Section III: Collaboration/Delegation Factors***

These statements have to do with the preference of working interactively with others or working in a solitary style. This indicates a comfort level with assigning work and sharing responsibilities with others.

Eight or more “a” responses would indicate less of a preference for working in teams or interactive groups and more of a tendency to work in a solitary environment. Given the choice, they are less likely to invite collaboration or delegate tasks to others.

Eleven or more “a” responses in this grouping would indicate an increased probability of micromanaging behaviors. There is a high likelihood that others may perceive that you place low value on the input and abilities of others and want to maintain personal influence over outcomes.

Seven or fewer “a” responses or eight or more “b” responses would indicate that the tendency toward micromanaging is less likely.



**Total Scoring**

Please add your total numbers from each section.

Section I	Control	“a” responses	_____
Section II	Familiarity	“b” responses	_____
Section III	Collaboration	“a” responses	_____
		TOTAL	_____

**Totals of 11 or less:** Please get a second opinion! Denial or sociable desirability may have influenced your responses. Most people who have a tendency toward micromanagement are not aware they are doing it.

**Totals of 21 or less:** Low probability of micromanagement behaviors. If accurate responses were selected, micromanagement tendencies are not in evidence.

**Totals in the range of 22–32:** Would indicate a medium to high probability that significant micromanagement behaviors are either currently being demonstrated or could be in the future. The tendency to micromanage may be inconsistent; however, there is a high probability that interference with or disruption of others either is or will occur. There is a medium likelihood that contributing to the low morale of others is or will occur.

**Scores of 33 and above:** This is considered the “red zone.” These scores indicate a high probability that significant micromanagement behaviors are currently impacting others. Substantial interference with and

disruption of others productivity is evident, probably to a career-damaging level. The negative impact on the morale of others is great and retention problems are likely to occur.

If you have scored in the red zone and continue to adamantly believe that you are not micromanaging, please access a dictionary and look up the meaning of the word *denial*.

As we move to chapter 2, we look at the primary factor that drives the behaviors of micromanagers: the inability to subordinate self.

### ***You Might Be Micromanaging If . . .***

---

People return from lunch to find that you have finished their project for them or assigned it to someone else.

You instruct others on how to be better organized while your own office is in chaos.

You are constantly directing others to fix problems and put out fires that you created yourself.

Delegating authority to others is as painful as gnawing off one of your own limbs.

You ever told someone, "You are responsible for this, but before you make any decisions, be sure to check with me."

Someone asks, "Why?" and your response is "Because I told you so."

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