

## **Micromanagement: Killing Employee Morale**

Employee morale is something that no business can ignore. It is something that greatly impacts employee performance, especially in a sales environment. Sales environments can, by their very nature, be very stressful and it falls to the managers to ensure that morale is kept up and performance optimized. Many managers are aware of this and create performance related incentives to their sales staff, including bonuses, nights out or even weekends away. While this can be a very positive way of improving employee morale, many managers are unaware how their day to day behaviour impacts their sales staff, thereby effectively nullifying the positive boost the incentives create.

The reason for this is that many sales managers still use micromanagement as what they perceive to be an effective management tool. This is a method that just does not work. Contrary to what the managers are attempting to do, their micromanagement results in poor morale and disheartened employees.

It is all too common for sales staff to be faced with managers who will lean over their shoulder every morning to pick apart their daily activities, frequently commenting and criticising on the lack of sales made before bombarding the salesperson with phrases like, "You need to make more calls". Following this, salespeople are confronted with requests for hourly updates on their activities and criticism when they have not completed certain tasks.

Micromanaging employees in this way leaves them feeling pressured and demotivated, causing them to become less involved in their work and distance themselves from their manager. In the worst case this leads to staff solely working for their pay check, leaving their enthusiasm at the door resulting in little or no productivity.

To avoid this situation, managers need to change their attitudes and rethink their techniques. Setting goals for your sales staff and encouraging them to work under their own initiative should help make your staff feel empowered and more positive in their work. Providing positive reinforcement and encouraging them to come to you for advice rather than just bombarding them with it will make your staff feel more confident in your abilities as a manager. With this confidence they will be more inclined to approach you with any problems they may be facing rather than stay silent and become more demoralized.

By feeling less restricted and more empowered, staff will be less stressed and employee morale should remain high. In this situation, the incentives you originally put forward will have their desired effect and your sales staff should become a more productive, cohesive team.