9 Ways Leaders Accidentally Ruin Good Employees



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Being a good manager is hard. Here are a few ways business leaders get in the way of their employees and stop them from being their most productive, innovative and positive selves.

1. Holding unnecessary meetings

Meetings need to create value for employees, such as brainstorming ideas, reaching a crucial decision or coordinating work. If it’s about anything else, skip it. Give your employees back their time by choosing your meetings strategically. Go in with a clear plan of what you want to cover during that time and hold everyone to it.

2. Giving unclear communication

“Let’s make sure to finish the project by quarter-end,” sounds like a clear directive, but really, it’s not. Stakeholders have different timelines and contribute in different ways to that final deadline, so they’re not able to schedule their time accordingly.

Give specific details when communicating goals or other work objectives to employees and encourage them to tell you when you’re not precise.

3. Giving too much information

On the other hand, it’s essential to provide the right amount of information to employees. “Drinking from the firehose,” as many people call it, is overwhelming and decreases productivity.

Deliver information in smaller chunks and through multiple channels to give them a chance to assimilate the information better.

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4. Responding too little and too late

When employees ask a question or make a request, don’t ignore it until you have time to answer. Learn how to triage questions based on priority, so everyone gets their answer promptly. If you can’t answer quickly, let employees know that you’ve seen their message and let them know when you’ll send a response.

5. Trying to control everything

Micromanagers are the worst. Preventing employees from owning their work, their domain or their role stifles their productivity and abilities and reduces their appetite for innovation and work. Armchair psychologists will try to diagnose why you do this, but instead, just stop.

Let go and give your employees the freedom to work. Offer guidance and suggestions, not mandates and orders.

6. Leading with emotions

Emotions have their place, even at work, but bringing too many into the workplace can harm a team. Teams will avoid dealing with a manager who gets angry at slights (real or imagined) or takes offense to any question. They'll just try to handle problems and situations on their own

Instead, use emotional and social intelligence to uncover why you react the way you do and how to deal with it. It'll make you easier to deal with, and your team will be happier and more productive.

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7. Being indecisive

Analysis paralysis happens when you try to consider every option before making a decision. Some say being indecisive is worse than being wrong. As a manager, your team looks to you for guidance and leadership, and that means making a lot of decisions every day. So you can't afford to be indecisive.

Your team needs you to decide on a course of action so they can get on with their days. And it's okay if you make a wrong one, you can always pivot and adjust to the situation. Your team will forgive you and appreciate that you acted swiftly to

rectify it.

8. Changing things too often

A manager who jumps on every new idea and changes their team's priorities rapidly can be a problem, too. For example, leaders who launch new initiatives to replace ones that haven't been given time to work or those who replace technology with whatever is trending before employees have a chance to learn the current systems. Employees will start to question your competency, vision, and resource management. Not to mention, they'll feel very insecure about their jobs and the future of the company.

Once you implement something new, leave it alone. Once you make a decision, don't change your mind.

9. Criticizing without praising

Everyone makes mistakes, and it's easy to point them out. They aren't meant to be used as a way to blame employees or to deflect negative outcomes from their performance.

Good leaders minimize the damage by using them as a way to introduce solutions to help, such as more training, job shadowing, switching strategies, and changing roles. They focus on solutions to the problems, so they don't happen again and work with employees to encourage those fixes.

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