



## The Under-Management Epidemic

*"You can't teach what you don't know, and you can't lead where you don't go."*

— Mary Jane Mapes



*"A true leader is not the one you look up to because they are the best. A true leader is one that draws out the best in you."*

— Anne Warfield



*"A good leader is a person who takes a little more than his/her share of the blame and little less than his/her share of the credit."*

— Unknown



*"A true leader has the confidence to stand alone, the courage to make tough decisions, and the compassion to listen to the needs of others. He/She does not set out to be a leader, but becomes one by the quality of his/her actions and the integrity of his/her intent. In the end, leaders are much like eagles — they don't flock, you find them one at a time."*

— Unknown

Have you ever been called a micro-manager, or have you ever worked for a micro-manager?

Micro-management, or managing with great or excessive control or attention to detail has fallen out of favor over the past two decades. However, research by Bruce Tuglan, of Rainmaker Thinking, indicates that we should be more worried at this point about under-managing than micro-managing.

The key factor affecting employee performance is the relationship employees have with their immediate supervisors. Tuglan's research indicates that many people in leadership positions at all levels are failing to lead, manage, and supervise their direct reports on a day-to-day basis.

**Under-management is defined as a condition in which a leader with supervisory authority fails to provide the following five management basics regularly and consistently because of influence, inclination, or circumstances:**

1. Clear statement of performance requirements and standard operating procedures related to recurring tasks and responsibilities.
2. Clear statements of defined parameters, measurable goals, and concrete deadlines for all work assignments that the direct report will be held accountable for.
3. Accurate monitoring, evaluation, and documentation of work performance.
4. Clear statements of specific feedback on work performance with guidance for improvement.
5. Rewards and detriments distributed fairly.

Managers interviewed in Tuglan's research were asked how often they covered the basics with their employees. Responses indicated the following frequency:

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| 1%  | Every Day  |
| 10% | Once a Week  |
| 25% | Once a Month   |
| 65% | Once a Year (Wonder what was discussed during the Performance Evaluation?) |

**Without regular attention to the management basics, supervisors:**

1. Become unaware of what is going on in their work groups.
2. Are ill-equipped to set appropriate goals and deadlines.
3. Are unlikely to catch problems before they spiral out of control.
4. Spend all their time putting out fires and are needlessly tangled in the details, because they failed to prevent the problems in the first place.
5. Lose the respect of their employees because they are viewed as "out of the loop."
6. Experience lower productivity and quality.

**When employees are asked what they want from the supervisors, answers include:**

1. More coaching and guidance.
2. Clearer goals.
3. More constructive criticism.
4. More recognition for achievements.

The following articles at <http://www.melbabenson.com/articles.php> provide information on the causes and prevention of under-management:

**"Environmental Factors Supporting the Spread of Under-Management"**

**"Leading Causes of Under-Management"**

**"Preventing Under-Management"**

**"Management Development Course / Individual Coaching Offered by Melba W. Benson, Ph.D."**

Maybe we should reconsider our definition of micro-managing.

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