



- Your role is to provide the "what" not the "how". Provide a clear description of the problem or task and let your team develop the approach and solutions. Identify all constraints, authority issues, timing and expected outcomes. Be available for clarification and recognize effort by openly giving and sharing your support and appreciation.
- Provide vision and context. People work first for money, then recognition and ultimately for meaning. A leader must help employees see the bigger picture and understand how they are contributing to it.
- Ask powerful questions and listen. The best way to not fall into directing is to ask open-ended questions that invite exploration and reduce defensiveness. Once you open the space for questions, it is critical to LISTEN. Keep your mind open and resist judging; have faith in the power of the question - it will get you to where you want to go.
- Know when and how to be direct. When options are few, time is scarce or regulations require another solution, don't invite discussion and options. This will frustrate your team and diminish trust. Explain the circumstances and be clear about your decision.
- One thing is clear for leaders and organizations in 21st century. This is not a go it alone world. Micromanagement is a go it alone style that may produce short term results but is highly susceptible to long term failure and professional burnout.
- Are you micromanaging? Here's a clue. You are passionate about a situation and as you deliver your prescriptions for success, you stop to take a breath, and suddenly you notice all the dispassionate looks on the faces of your team. If on the other hand, you look around and see anticipation and ideas bubbling up, waiting to be released then congratulations you've led them well and avoided the trap of micromanagement!

For additional insights read: *Leadership Run Amok*, Harvard Business Review June 2007. Portions of this article were adapted from BlessingWhite's, *Five Tips for Avoiding the "My Way Trap"* And for training on how to be a leader of relationships explore how you can become a participant in our *Relationship – Centered Leadership®* program.