



Why Do Boards or Board Members Micromanage?

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The micromanagers have no idea of their true role.

I am convinced that a lot of a Board's or Board member's micromanaging ways are due to the fact that they have no idea what is expected of them, or of what their duties are, thus they jump in with all four feet in an attempt to manage it all. Having sat on a brand new Board, I observed in amazement their continual micromanagement of day to day activities, sending vast amounts of email expecting feedback from every member, holding meetings twice or thrice a week to make simple decisions only to have those meetings last 4 hours while individuals argued over minutiae. Clearly, they were unclear on their role as Board members: They thought they should be **functionaries instead of policymakers and leaders**.

Most of us are functionaries: We perform specific tasks then receive a paycheck for our efforts. Seldom are we in charge of setting policies, or taking on a leadership role, for our companies - we are the ones who carry out those policies under our leaders per our job descriptions on a daily basis. The same is the true of Board members. In their "real" lives, they have had to perform various functions and tasks for which they receive remuneration. Many have never had a leadership role. Thus, it's their *comfort zone to do, rather than direct*. Result: Micromanagement.

Management: We could alleviate a lot of our problems, and those of the communities we manage if after every annual meeting or upon formation of a brand new homeowner-controlled Board, they be given education and direction in the form of Board orientation. This time spent on the front end of a new Board term every year can very likely save your manager and your firm a lot of headaches. It's also a fantastic way to provide your client with a value-added service by providing the Board with real-life, hands on help. It demonstrates the company's (and senior staff's) understanding of the real problems a Board faces and gives the client a view of the executive and senior staff in your firm. Orientation is great for the Board and a great marketing tool for the management firm as well.

Boards: When looking for guidance on your role as trustees, as well as how to truly lead your organization, an excellent point of reference is <http://www.carvergovernance.com/>. "The Carver Governance model enables the board to focus on the larger issues, to delegate with clarity, to control management's job without meddling, to rigorously evaluate the accomplishment of the organization; to truly lead its organization." Yes, Boards, there IS a way - already thought out and in use around the world - to structure yourselves as policymakers and leaders. No need to reinvent the wheel.

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