MODULE OVERVIEW

Micromanaged or left alone: Getting autonomy right

Adaptive module | ~20 min

According to Gallup, the manager alone accounts for nearly 70% of the variance in team engagement. Too present, they stifle; unreachable, they leave everyone working without guidance. This module also equips team members to act: negotiate a reporting schedule, make a four-point request, and announce the decision they will make if no reply comes.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

01 Distinguish the two extremes, the ever-present and the invisible manager, and what each costs in engagement.

02 Take an adult-to-adult stance with an ever-present manager: state your need for autonomy, negotiate a reporting schedule.

03 Make a precise request to an invisible manager (need, duration, time slot, deadline) and announce your default decision.

04 Ask yourself, as a manager, whether you are providing security or taking away autonomy, then plan for your absence.

WHO IT'S FOR

Team members keen to negotiate the right distance with their manager, and managers seeking the right balance.

- **Prerequisite:** none

HOW THE MODULE WORKS

Self-paced, with practice tailored to each learner.

1 **Self-assessment**: on 9 dimensions, to gauge current habits and guide the practice.

2 **Expert video**: 10 minutes, with 3 pauses for reflection.

3 **Practice scenarios**: the first 2 chosen from the self-assessment, then 16 optional ones. Every answer gets feedback: what it leads to, and one way to improve.

4 **Dated commitment**: one action to try, written by the learner or picked from the suggestions.

5 **Memo to download**: key takeaways, questions, commitment, personal notes and checklists.

ASSESSMENT AND COMPLETION

Pass mark: 80%

The score takes into account your answers to the practice scenarios, your commitment and, where relevant, any additional learning activities. Passing requires a commitment and a score of at least 80%.

METHODS & MODELS

- Adult-to-adult stance in the face of micromanagement, inspired by transactional analysis (Eric Berne)
- The right balance of autonomy and control for each team member, inspired by Situational Leadership (Hersey & Blanchard)
- Afthonios method for a structured request (need, duration, time slot, deadline)
- Afthonios method for an announced default decision ("If I don't hear back by Thursday…")

SOURCES & REFERENCES

- Gallup, State of the Global Workplace: low engagement costs the world economy about $8.9 trillion a year (2024, ~9% of global GDP)
- Gallup, State of the American Manager: managers account for about 70% of the variance in team engagement
- Paul Zak, "The Neuroscience of Trust" (Harvard Business Review): 74% less stress in high-trust organizations
- Eagle Hill Consulting, Workforce Burnout Survey 2025: 42% of employees experiencing burnout say their manager takes no action

Module created by Afthonios.com.

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