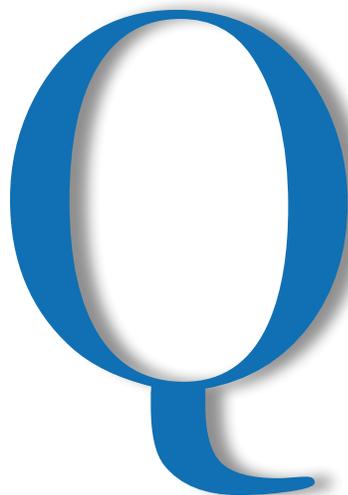




Roundtable Member,  
**John Hastings**, Director  
of Sales at Elavon,  
shared his perspective  
with our team on  
how to earn the trust  
of a boss who's a  
micromanager.



## Mentoring **MATTERS**



*Help! My boss is a micromanager. He wants to review everything I do and be involved in every decision. It feels like he doesn't trust me and it's affecting my motivation. What can I do to earn his trust?*

There are a couple of key things that I've come to learn about micromanagement:

1. Sometimes micromanaging is not about working with a micromanager, but rather about the need for your boss to step in and fill a gap.
2. There will always be leaders out there who are inclined toward micromanaging, but if you can be 'bulletproof' in effectively managing all that you are responsible for, there leaves no room for micromanaging.

Recently, when I began in a new role and working with a new boss in my organization, I found myself feeling like I was being micromanaged. I was unclear around priorities and there were many occasions when I worked on things that I thought were a priority, only to discover they had shifted and were no longer a priority. And, even when I did work on the right priorities, it was often re-worked or re-done. It was an important aspect of my role to be adaptable in a rapidly changing environment, yet I seemed to be struggling to figure out what the right things were to do, and to do things right.

*Over time I came to realize that my sense of being micromanaged was really about the need for my boss to fill a gap on my end.*

Feeling uncomfortable and demotivated by this, I knew this was something I needed to turn around, and so put a very dedicated focus to making some changes. Here are a few of the things that have helped me move the needle:

**Creating structure.** I discovered that structure was not my forte. I needed better structure to ensure that I was staying on top of all aspects of my role and core responsibilities, and staying aligned and focused on the right priorities.

In this regard, I created a document that categorized all of my work as follows:

**Boiling** – Urgent and important work that requires immediate action and/or attention.

**Percolating** – Work that is going to be urgent and important, but at this point does not need immediate attention/action. Things I need to be ready to move to boiling.

**Warm** – Work that is more of a 'want to do' than a 'need to do'. Things that if not attended to at this point, will not be a problem. These may be things that get delegated

This is a living, breathing document that changes regularly and keeps me focused. It is used as a reference for one-to-one meetings with my boss for alignment on priorities.

**Distinguishing tasks and projects (longer, broader term work).**

It's important not to lose sight of keeping movement on the bigger, broader initiatives when there are immediate directives at play that can seem all-consuming.

**Saying No.** I have learned that it is not always in my best interest to say yes when I'm unsure it can get done, or done in the timeframe required. Sometimes it's better to say no, or say yes with an asterisk, noting what will be sacrificed to get this done.

These steps are ones that have made a difference for me in establishing better trust and confidence with my boss. It continues to be work in progress, but it has definitely been progress! And, it all really started with taking a good hard look in the mirror. If you think your boss is a micromanager, you may want to start there too and consider if there are gaps on your end that may be driving the micromanagement.

*Questioning WHY micromanaging is occurring is often more valuable than labelling someone a micromanager.*



**John Hastings** is Director of Sales – Business Development Canada for Elavon, a global payment processor. Elavon's goal is to facilitate fair and transparent commerce around the world for its customers and partners. John oversees the Canadian Direct Telesales program, as well the Costco Canada/Elavon referral partnership team, driving new customer acquisition and revenue opportunity in the SMB space. His role involves planning and implementing both short and long term sales strategies and executing on sales tactics and action plans. John began his career at Elavon in 2012 as a Sales Agent, quickly moving into management, and has been the Director since January of 2015.



**Glain Roberts-McCabe** is passionate about the art of leadership and supporting ambitious mid-career leaders. She created **The Roundtable** to provide emerging leaders with the navigational skills, tools and savvy needed to manage increases in scope, pressure and leadership complexity.