

# IDEAS FOR SUCCESS

April 27, 2011

## Putting your plan in action

By Mark Beard, M.A.

If you are a person who enjoys taking the initiative in your work, you likely do not enjoy being held back or micromanaged.

Nevertheless, not all who take the initiative to get the job done feel confident in moving forward—sometimes for good reason. At times it is because the person lacks confidence. At times it is because the person to whom we report is a micromanager. Let's consider how to take the initiative in these two instances.

**1. Lacking in personal confidence.** Often we mistakenly ask for people's input on how we should do our job when they have little or no idea of what it takes to do our job. It is important to remember leaders (supervisors/managers) are not always leading because they know how to do everyone's job, but usually because they know how to lead employees to accomplishing the task—a subtle but important difference. Hence, we need them to clarify goals, budgets, boundaries, etc. But as a proactive person, we should develop our own plan for getting our job done. Think of it this way, you are uniquely qualified because it is *your* job.

**2. Working with a micromanager.** If you know what to do and how to do it and only need permission from your supervisor or boss, never ask, "What do you want me to do?" or "How should I do this?" This only increases the likelihood you will be slowed up in your work by their plan that likely will not be well suited for the task. Instead, when dealing with a micromanager, the best approach might be to present options with which you are comfortable. For example, "Would you like me to accomplish this by using option "A" or "B"? And then define those options. Most of the time, if you know your job, your supervisor will choose one or tell you to choose. In the event they do not respond right away and you are facing a deadline, you might respectfully remind them of the deadline and say, "If it is okay with you I am going to do the following so I can meet my deadline."

**3. Presenting your plan with confidence.** First, set the expectation: "I have a great (or at least a good) idea!" Secondly,

present the benefits of the plan. This is where you create enthusiasm before they get a chance to pick your plan apart. Thirdly, present your plan to accomplish what you have proposed. Make sure it is well thought out and obvious concerns are addressed. Finally, allow for input. Many supervisors and managers like to "tweak" any plan they encounter. Don't allow this to be a deal-breaker. It's still your plan and it not only is their right to "tweak" the plan, it also creates good will and a team mentality.

Even with the best of plans, we must always remember to defer to the final decision of the person to whom we answer. After all, that person is the boss and may have a view of the "big picture" we do not possess. All great plans do not work in all situations, but at least you will have the satisfaction of having done your best.

Mark Beard is a Therapist and Life Coach as well as a speaker, free-lance writer and author. For more information visit his website at: [www.markbeard.org](http://www.markbeard.org)

© Mark Beard 2011 *Ideas for Success* is a resource provided free of cost for your personal enrichment. Ideas and suggestions provided are written for a general audience to provoke the reader to thought and should not be considered as personal advice or counsel. All rights reserved.