



Fired for 45 minutes. Yes, you read it right.

It was not my proudest moment, but I now fully recognize how I ended up there. I simply didn't do what was needed to control the situation I was in. I let it escalate and then took it upon myself to aggravate the situation further. I became combative and let an unskilled leader influence my behavior.

He was in our way. Our team knew what we needed to do, but he just couldn't find it in himself to let the experts do what they do best. We suffered because of it. In hopes of making a name for himself, he spent his entire three month tenure in this position trying to reinvent

the wheel. Near the end of his time with the company, we were left flat footed and parked on four square wheels. This is **MY** story anyway.

Then it happened. He proceeded to tell me that we were going to have a one way conversation. I made sure it was anything but that. I let the event continue to escalate and further contributed to it myself. After 20 minutes of escalation, he finally snapped, told me I was done, and walked me out the door. To my benefit, our VP caught the tail end of this tirade and followed me out to my car. 45 minutes later, I was back managing my team.

I considered myself lucky. I could have been unemployed for a lot longer than 45 minutes. I used this opportunity to go back and evaluate how all this came to be. Here is what I took away from this experience:

- I recognized that I was partially to blame. I did nothing to try to defuse the situation early on before it escalated.
- I spoke negatively to my team about this manager instead of taking the issue up with him directly.
- I intentionally made his days as difficult as possible simply because he was doing the same to me.
- I did not set a good example for my team.
- I should have taken a moment to understand the situation from his perspective.
- Worst of all, I let him influence **MY** behavior.

What he should have learned from this?

- He should have let his very capable staff do what they were trained to do. Micro-management never works in the end.
- If he wanted to look at making process changes, he should have focused on those that were not working, not those that were.
- He should have made an effort to get to know and understand his staff.
- He should have been more self-aware. To this day, I question whether he understands exactly why he had so many issues with those with whom we worked.
- He needed to take a [Crucial Conversations](#) and an [Emotional Intelligence](#) class.

You see what I did there? You know, the shameless plug.

In the end, these were both the worst and best three months of my professional career. The level of stress I endured each and every day was exhausting and unhealthy. On the flipside, these three months taught me more about leadership than any book I have read to date.

No matter which side of a similar scenario you find yourself on, self-awareness, self-management, and empathy are key. Carefully analyze your situation and commit to understanding how you are contributing to the issue. Have that crucial conversation before things get out of hand. Finally, always try to understand what the situation looks like from the other side.

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