

How to Manage Your Manager: Working With a Bad Boss

In an increasingly complex, global business environment managers are in constant demand. Managers play a vital role in any organization. Specifically, managers are responsible for: Planning, Organizing, Staffing, Directing, Coordinating, Reporting and Budgeting (POSDCORB). For the most part, managers are selected and promoted to positions of management based on their strong technical skills. Frequently, managers or bosses - do not have the management skills to perform in the complicated 21st century business environment. Indeed, in a recent survey at the "Badbossology" website almost one in two employees said they would fire their boss if given the chance. So, the question is "what do you do about a bad boss?"

by Dr. R. W. Robertson and Dr. P. Low *)

Bad Boss Syndrome: The Signs

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Bad Boss Syndrome: The Signs There are many signs of a bad boss including:

Poor Promotion Policies

Most managers are promoted as a result of their strong technical skills. For example, if an organization is looking for a manager of accounting they generally favor the best accountant. Unfortunately, the technical skills of accounting may not be those required in their new role as manager. Few organizations provide any form of leadership training for their "new bosses" The new boss is pushed into the deep end of the pool and forced to swim or sink. Phones, faxes, e-mail, mobile phones, sms messages and meetings all contribute to information overload. Unfortunately, increased information does not translate into better communication. Many bosses cannot relate well to their colleagues and employees on a personal level. In fact, many bad bosses hide behind information. Bad bosses are generally busy but seldom do they actually do the right thing well. In many cases bad managers are a product of experience. If your role model is a bad boss it is likely that you will follow this behaviour as you move up the corporate ladder. Most people learn by example both good and bad. A bad boss frequently generates future bad bosses.

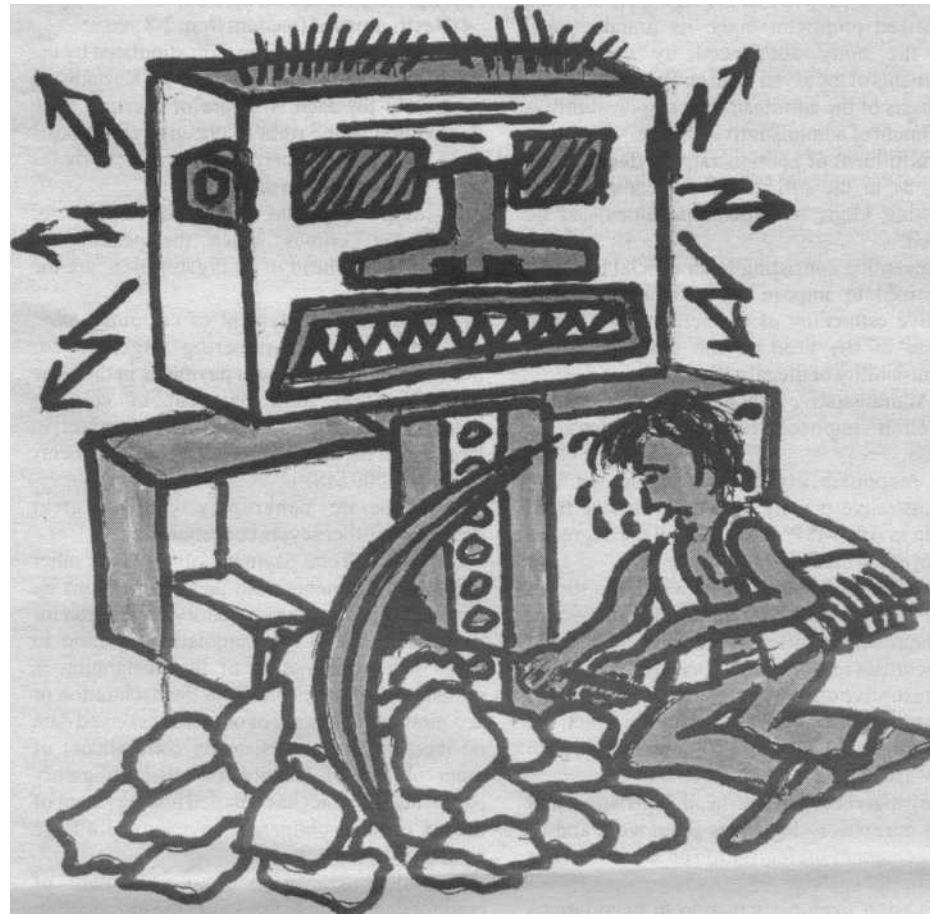
Many bad bosses can neither delegate nor support decisions of their subordinates. They prefer to make most decisions themselves and maintain control over day-to-day activities. These types of bosses maintain a micro management approach which reduces the ability of their employees to grow in their jobs.

The "You Do It" Boss

Many bosses cannot lead and generally are "hands-off". Subordinates must do everything with little leadership from the boss. In these

what do you as an employee do about this situation. There are a number of strategies to manage your boss.

It is important to be supportive of your leader and be a team player. An employment relationship is a two way street. It must be mutually advantageous. On your part do not openly criticize or demean your boss or his decisions support him or her. If you are constantly opposed to decisions being made by your boss it may be time to look elsewhere for employment. Do what you say you will do on a timely basis.



cases, the boss will frequently take credit for success; and, equally will blame subordinate for failure.

If these are the signs of a bad boss the question is

Many employees with bad bosses simply give up and become maliciously compliant only doing as little as necessary. This strategy is neither helpful to the employee nor the

organization. Most people - including bosses remember what you may have done for them most recently. Always do your best. It will benefit you in the long run.

Employees who are on a successful career track generally are "continuous learners". They increase their value to their employers by learning new skills and taking additional training to ensure they are constantly improving. Also, these employees generally build networks of support both internally and externally. All of the foregoing can assist in dealing with a difficult boss.

Frequently, bad bosses are reluctant or not interested in setting priorities or work plans for their employees.

In these cases the employee must proactively initiate the discussion of work plans and priorities.

You need "face time" with your boss. Be clear with your boss on what it is you are responsible for in your job.

It is important to keep the perspective of the big picture. Do not let "bad boss" issues become personalized. You must work together on a professional level.

Employees in the 21st century must have an exit strategy. Simply, an exit strategy is a "last choice" option in the event that the relationship between you and your boss does not work out. You must be prepared to look for alternative employment. Your resume should be kept up-to-date and your knowledge of the market current. In summary, it is more than likely that you will have a bad boss at some point in your career. First and foremost you should work to improve your relationship with your boss. It is important to keep positive about your career; continue to focus on getting the job done; build your resume and develop new peer and professional networks.

However, if all else fails it is equally as important to be prepared to move on to other opportunities. Employees in 21st century organizations must prepare contingency plans to deal with many unforeseen events or issues including the dreaded "bad boss syndrome".

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