



Three Steps for Managing a Stressful Relationship With Your Boss

Did you know that your relationship with your boss can impact your health and well being? It's true. In fact, people who are unhappy take an extra 15 sick days each year according to the Gallup-Healthways Well-Being Index.

When asked about job satisfaction, whether bosses were authoritative or collaborative, whether there was openness and trust, and whether individual strengths were recognized, 20% of full time employees nationwide reported working in a negative environment. This adds legitimacy to the statement that we've all heard before: people don't leave bad jobs, they leave bad bosses. Compare this to the fact that in another study, 93% of managers considered themselves to be excellent or good bosses while only 67% of employees rated their boss favorably. (Source: Hudson).

So what do you do if you are unhappy in your current situation? Before you jump ship consider the following.

1. **Talk to your boss.** Sound obvious? You bet but you wouldn't believe how many times people have said that when they handed in their resignation, their bosses said, "I wish I had known you were unhappy. I would have liked the opportunity to try to work things out." Remember, bosses are human too and you don't know what is going on in their work or personal life that may be impacting their relationship with you.
2. **Solicit input from other trusted parties.** When trying to diagnose an illness it often helps to get a second opinion, right? So take some time and talk to people that you can trust either insider or outside your organization. Sometimes your human resources representative can be of help but keep in mind that he/she is there to protect the best interests of the company including your boss. If there isn't anyone that you feel comfortable talking to, then invest in a coaching relationship. That way you will be assured objective, confidential advice.
3. **Consider your options.** Would it be possible to leverage your skills and experience by taking another position internally? Often there are many opportunities available that would help get you out of an uncomfortable situation until you figure out your next step. Plus, who knows? Maybe your boss will wind up leaving. If not, then it may be time to put together your resume and network for external opportunities.

As talent becomes scarce and employers take a closer look at the impact that bosses have on employees, the boss-subordinate relationship will likely get a closer look particularly as it relates to productivity and health and well being in the workplace. Until

then, by taking these positive actions you will already be well on your way to better health, a better relationship with your boss and who knows, maybe even a better job. What are you waiting for?

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