



Dear Friend,

Water Cooler Chatter

Have you ever gathered with colleagues around the water cooler, in the kitchenette, or in someone's office or cubicle, and fussed about your boss? Stop telling a story! I know you have. Though I'm not proud of it, I'll be honest and admit that I've been there. And, in the many years I've been in the boss' role, I know that I've been the subject of at least a few fuss fest's myself.

What's behind these gripe sessions? Yeah, we've all had, or been, the boss when life at work required some changing, or when production or service tanked, or when people's performance was evaluated.

When situations like these arise, the water cooler chatter makes you feel better for a minute or two. After all, you learn that you're not alone; somebody else is feeling your pain. You find that your point makes sense; it's shared by another. But, after that momentary relief wears off, honestly, what benefit is there of the water cooler chatter?

I think one reason people gripe is to try to make a difference. Unfortunately, talking with a co-worker who's in the same boat you're in does little long-term good. To have a more pronounced and positive impact on that boss of yours, it won't happen from grouching around the water cooler. But, it is possible.

The April edition of EA Insights looked at the topic of the "good boss" from the perspective of that supervisor, and it offered suggestions for how he or she could function and lead better. This month, let's put the shoe on the other foot and look at ways that staff members can support a supervisor and, by doing so, foster "good boss" characteristics.

Want a good boss? Take the first step!


All the best,

June

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**The Good Boss:
How to Support (or Encourage) One**

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Being in charge can be difficult. Sometimes people only recognize the perks and the prestige, but they don't see the responsibilities and the headaches.

Now, that's not said to excuse bad behavior among bosses. (Perish the thought!) However, it is helpful to lend perspective. Often, the load can be heavy.

So, since most folks report to someone -- a CEO who's accountable to a board of directors, a manager answering to an executive, or a line staff member reporting to a supervisor -- there's reason to be interested in the role you could play in positively impacting the atmosphere with, and for, your boss.

Consider these three tips for supporting one who already is a good boss or for encouraging one who's not quite there yet.

Do your job. Want to help someone function more effectively as a manager, supervisor, or leader? Do the job you were brought in to do.

Perhaps nothing results in more frustration, more tension, or more

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"Quotes"

"The relationship with your boss is a partnership. It takes effort to build the relationship and nurture it. You have to communicate well, avoid confrontations and resolve differences in a positive way."

~Jane Boucher

"Influence is to be measured, not by the extent of surface it covers, but by its kind."

~William Channing

"It's always better to deliver the news yourself rather than allow your boss to be surprised."

~Mary Cheney

"The idea is to have those goals, and then throughout the year, talk about them regularly with your boss. It can be something as formal as a monthly or quarterly meeting, or simply giving them good news in the hallway."

~Bill Coleman

micromanaging -- for bosses and for staff -- than when the job's not getting done. The bottom line is that the core of a manager's job is achieving results. The challenge comes because most of what is to be accomplished is not slated to be done at the hand of that manager...but *through* others.

So, when you, or a co-worker, or your team check out and stop performing as envisioned, you increase the pressure for your boss. Not only is there a need to figure out and try to fix the situation so that stuff starts happening again, but there also is a need to account to his or her supervisor(s) about the *why's* and the *when's* and the *how much's* connected with what's happening.

So, want to encourage a good boss? Do your job!

Communicate. To help your boss be a good one, communicate clearly, timely, and fully.

Remember, your boss is responsible for you and likely for several other people as well. Think about that for a minute. Given that, it is impossible for him or her to know instinctively what's going on with every person and in every function at every moment of every day. Yet, you want your boss to know who you are so that you can get assignments that fit your skills and your interests. You want your boss to be aware of glitches that make the job harder so that corrections can be made. You want your boss to understand functions and personnel so that he or she can be an advocate in decision-making concerning you and your team. You want your boss to know when things are going well, and why, so that stories of solid work and victories can be shared within the team and within the organization. Wow!



None of this can happen without communication.

Do your part to build relationship with your boss so that he or she comes to understand and respect what you have to say. Don't wait until matters reach fever pitch to relay information; the interaction you begin when things are going well lays the foundation for communication about more critical or sensitive matters. Don't pick and choose the facts you convey; you build the confidence needed for open communication when your boss has experience that he or she can trust you for honest input -- good, bad, or ugly.

Use your influence for good. Your boss may have a position of *authority*, but *power* often is distributed throughout the team. So, if you are a person of influence within your group, how do you wield that power as it relates to your boss and your team?

You have a choice. You can use your influence to undermine and poison. You can use your influence to encourage and enhance. You enable your boss to do more with, through, and for you and the team, when you exercise your influence to support and not to tear down.

If you're like most people, at one point or another, you've complained about a bad boss. However, when you stop to think about it, you've got more sway than you might imagine in impacting that boss and the way he or she functions. So, stop moaning, and start encouraging!

Coming Soon...



Video mini-sessions on professional and personal development topics of interest to you

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At **Executive Advantage**, we are committed to providing results-based business and management consulting, leadership development, and coaching support. We partner with business leaders to build healthy, well-functioning organizations, where goals are met and people thrive. We also partner with individuals to create professional (and personal) lives with clearer direction, improved results, and greater balance.

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"People complain their bosses never give them positive reinforcement... I say to them 'If you think you get too little recognition, think of your boss. He or she gets less.'"

~Aubrey Daniels

"Having someone like him around, other players sort of raise their playing. That's the impact of just having him around. He's a big leader and a great influence on the younger players."

~Jon Deeble

"If you think your boss is stupid, remember you wouldn't have a job if he was any smarter."

~John Gotti

"Leadership is more, if not much more influence, rather than position."

~John Maxwell

"I knew I had an experienced group coming in. I expected good things from them."

~Terri Parrish

"You've got to create friends, not enemies. If you think your boss is an idiot, tell your friends at home. Not anyone in the office."

~Robin Ryan