

3 Things New Managers Need to Know About Being a Good Boss

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Jen Hubley
Luckwaldt

7/25/2016

In many surveys, [bad managers are the No. 1 reason people leave their jobs](#). Needless to say, you want to be one of the good ones, so that your team sticks around and does their best work. The trouble is, most people become bosses after doing an exceptional job at something totally unrelated to management – and being the world’s best individual contributor doesn’t necessarily mean that you’re destined for leadership greatness.

If you’re new to management, but want to excel in your role, it’s important to start out by understanding what makes a good boss effective. Here’s what you need to know:

Do You Know What You're Worth?

1. You will not be everyone’s BFF.

Everyone’s had that Michael Scott-type boss who seems more invested in making friends than making good decisions. Don’t be that guy.

This is especially tricky if you’ve been promoted from within.

“As exhilarating as this change is in many ways, it also means you can’t be part of the team like you used to be,” writes Lea McLeod at [The Muse](#). “For example, indulging in office gossip was never a good practice to begin with, but as a manager, it’s even more taboo. Although it’s likely the team won’t invite you to the water cooler now, some employees may test you to see if you’ll engage. Excuse yourself with a curt, ‘That’s really none of my business,’ and leave the conversation.”

Ideally, your reports will respect you; they might even like you. But they won’t be close to you the way they’re close to their colleagues who don’t do their annual review.

2. Your job is to empower, not fix or micromanage.

“Employees perform best when empowered and trusted to do well in their jobs,” writes Joel Garfinkle, author of [How to Be a Great Boss](#), at [SmartBrief](#). “Think back to the times you felt most inspired to do your best. Chances are it was when you were trusted with real responsibility.”

Garfinkle suggests making sure employees know how their work fits into the company’s goals, providing clear expectations about each project, and making sure that workers know that their manager has their back (and will help them if they need it).

3. What you do will have a lot more impact than what you say.

It’s all well and good to tell your reports that you respect them, that you want them to work independently, that your “door is always open.” But, if your behavior isn’t congruent with your statements, you won’t convince them.

Actions speak louder than words. To show your reports that you respect them, treat them as you’d like be treated – no yelling, dishonest dealing, or dismissing their concerns without listening. To show them that you trust them to do their work without micromanagement, give them the tools they need to succeed, and then leave them to it. And, to prove that you’re always willing to listen, listen – even when you suspect that you’ll be forced to say no.

