



SUPER BOSS:

Be the Boss Everyone Wants
While Accelerating Your Career



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Table of Contents

Table of Contents.....	4
Introduction	5
Being a Great Boss Helps Your Career	6
Characteristics of Bosses That Stand Out To Their Employees.....	9
Characteristics of Bosses That Stand Out To Their Employers.....	12
Help Your Employees Excel	15
How to Thrive at Work	20
Conclusion	23

Introduction

Being a great boss is part skill and part art. If you're a great boss, your employees will love to work for you.

Most importantly, being a great boss is one of the best ways to accelerate your career. Being a good boss is much more than making your employees happy. It's also more than driving them hard and bleeding every last corpuscule of productivity from them.

Being a good boss is like a tightrope act. Happy, capable employees that will go to the mat for you is the objective. Is it possible to have happy employees that are working hard to help you impress your boss? Absolutely.

Within reason, the more you do for your employees, the more they're willing to do for you. Forget about bribery. It doesn't work, at least not for long.

If you're a great boss, you're making your boss happy while your employees are simultaneously making you happy.

"The one important thing you do as boss is you set the standard. The minute you go in and say 'we'll let it go this time,' you set a new standard, which is lower. So you cannot do that."

- Bill Kurtis

Being a Great Boss Helps Your Career

It might appear that being a great boss is counterproductive to your own career. It seems that you can either cater to your employees or to your employer. After all, what's good for your employees is detrimental to your company. Or is it?

It's true that your employees might prefer to stay at home or spend the day surfing the internet. However, you can create a situation that results in both you and your employees enjoying work as much as possible.

What's good for your employees is often advantageous to you.

See how being a good boss to your employees can advance your career:

1. **Your success is directly attributable to how well your employees perform.** A good boss has happy and successful employees. When your employees are excelling, you're excelling.

2. **Your employees are more loyal.** They'll put their collective noses to the grindstone when necessary. Unhappy employees can sabotage your success in more ways than you might imagine. A good boss has content employees.
3. **Your life is easier.** When you're a good boss, your employees have fewer challenges at work with their peers.
 - ▶ ***Employees are also less likely to call in sick or to defect and find another job.*** More gets done when people show up to work. Training new employees is time consuming and expensive.
4. **Your employees can help you secure employment in the future.** There are several ways your employees can help in the future with your career.
 - ▶ You never know whom your employees know. One of your employees might be childhood friends with the Vice President of Operations.
 - ▶ An employee might have a friend or relative that's prominent within another company. Everyone knows someone that could help you.

- ▶ Your employee might move to another company and put in a good word for you when a suitable position becomes available.
- ▶ One of your employees might go on to be extremely successful and offer you a job someday.
- ▶ ***People are incredibly valuable resources.*** You can't predict how they can assist you in the future.

Being a great boss to your employees is an indirect way of helping yourself. You don't have to choose between your employees and your company. ***You can serve two masters simultaneously and strengthen your career prospects.*** By understanding the big picture, the solution to making everyone happy is clear.

Think about how you can help your employees and help yourself at the same time..

"In the past a leader was a boss. Today's leaders must be partners with their people... they no longer can lead solely based on positional power."

- Ken Blanchard

Characteristics of Bosses That Stand Out To *Their Employees*

Use these ideas to stand out to the team you lead:

1. **Listen.** You don't know everything. Your employees will often have excellent suggestions that can prove to be very beneficial. Listening is a valuable skill in many facets of life.
2. **Be fair.** Few things breed resentment and discontent like unfairness. Treat all employees fairly and equally. When one employee is treated more favorably than the rest, you're headed for challenges.
3. **Extend support and reassurance.** Many people are too afraid or uncertain to do their best work. Part of your responsibility is to allay those fears in your employees. ***Confident employees can accomplish more.***
 - ▶ Imagine how you'd perform if your boss wasn't supportive or reassuring. Now multiply that across several employees.

4. **Avoid micromanaging.** If you've hired the right people, you shouldn't need to manage every detail. Too much oversight instills a lack of confidence and robs your employees of enthusiasm.
 - ▶ Have you ever had a boss that didn't trust you to handle anything autonomously? How did you feel about that boss?
5. **Show appreciation.** Hard work is easier to swallow when people are thanked for their efforts. Words are free. Be generous with them. Employees love to feel appreciated for their work.
 - ▶ Have you ever gone above and beyond in the workplace and had your efforts go unnoticed? How likely would you be willing to put forth the same effort again in the future?
6. **Be willing take the blame.** There are two kinds of bosses: those that shift the blame to an employee and those that absorb the blame themselves.
 - ▶ Even as a child, you've been blamed for something you didn't do. How did you feel? Some things don't change in adulthood.

7. **Schedule only necessary meetings.** Few things are more soul-sucking than a meeting that accomplishes nothing. Keep meetings short, have an agenda, and take care of business efficiently.
8. **Provide constructive feedback.** Employees like to know when they're doing well. They also like to know when they're not. Let your employees know how they could be doing better.

Can you see how demonstrating these characteristics benefit your employees and yourself? **Support and build your employees.** Be fair, communicate, and avoid micromanaging.

Consider what your boss and company want from you. When you understand their perspective, it's much easier to make decisions. How can your employees best help you to satisfy your employer?

"My wife is the boss at home, and my daughters are the bosses. I am just the worker. We are a very warm family and very happy."

- Jet Li

Characteristics of Bosses That Stand Out To *Their Employers*

Stand out to your employer with these strategies:

1. Perform your required tasks at the highest level.

Whether you're a supervisor or the CEO, you have responsibilities specific to your job title. A supervisor might be required to turn in a production report at the end of the day. A CEO might have to write a quarterly letter to shareholders.

- ▶ ***Get things done well and on time.*** Reliability is important to all employers.

2. Develop your employees for the future. Your employer expects you to develop one or more of your employees to fill your position should you be promoted or leave. It's wise to plan for the future.

- ▶ Your employees will also appreciate the opportunity. While some employees would be happy to hold the same position for life, most would like to experience career growth over time.

An employee that's prepared to take the next step is more valuable to the company and job market.

3. **Utilize your resources to the best of your ability.**

Your resources are limited. You have a limited number of employees, money, and time at your disposal. Increasing the capability of your employees is one way to increase your effectiveness.

- ▶ Happy, motivated, and capable employees help you to perform at a higher level. Every increase in an employee's performance helps you to do your job better. You can get more done without having to work harder yourself.

4. **Develop your ability to manage and get along with people.** This is the most valuable trait a manager can have. ***The ability to effectively lead and inspire others is invaluable.***

- ▶ Your own abilities are limited. You're only a single person. However, when you can increase the effectiveness of others, you're far more valuable to your company.

Get your work done on time and at a high level. If you can do that without creating turmoil in the workplace, you're

already doing better than most employees. ***A great boss can take things even further and build his employees.*** If you can increase the effectiveness of ten employees by 10% each, you've just created an additional person's worth of work capacity.

"A good boss makes his men realize they have more ability than they think they have so that they consistently do better work than they thought they could. "

- Charles Erwin Wilson

Help Your Employees Excel

If you help your employees perform better at work, you can both reap the benefits. ***The keys are communication, starting with good and capable employees, and setting a good example.*** Help your employees to build the skills and knowledge needed to perform at a high level.

A good boss helps their employees to perform at their best:

1. **Let your wishes be known.** As a group and individually, your employees can't help you to succeed if you don't communicate your needs and expectations clearly.
 - ▶ Create policies that will help to reach your goals. No one can read your mind. Be clear and concise. ***Remember that your employees benefit when you impress your boss and meet the company's expectations.*** Be selfish and everyone wins.
2. **Hire excellent people.** Most jobs can be done by just about anyone with the proper training. Place an emphasis on hiring good people and many of your human resource issues will disappear. By hiring good people, you help all of your employees.

- ▶ One great hire can make a significant difference for you and your team. One bad hire can have serious consequences. The wrong person can create chaos and bring productivity to a halt. Morale is important, too.
3. **Hire highly skilled workers.** Having good people is good, but having good people with great skills is even better!
4. **Identify the strengths and weaknesses in each employee.** What is preventing a particular employee from excelling? It could be a variety of things:
- ▶ ***Grooming or dress.*** Every office has an employee that dresses like he just got done changing the oil in his car. Teach employees that their appearance is judged by others, fairly or not. Ensure that everyone is dressing appropriately.
 - ▶ ***Social skills.*** Not everyone is skilled at communicating and getting along with others. Consider buying an appropriate book for employees with this challenge.

- ▶ **Social intelligence.** Think about the people you know that thrive at work and socially, especially those that aren't particularly knowledgeable or educated. What do they have? Social intelligence. ***The ability to manage one's emotions, recognize emotions in others, and make appropriate decisions can override many other weaknesses.***
- ▶ **Public speaking skills.** Public speaking skills develop quickly, but require practice. Give each member of your team regular opportunities to present their work to the group. This can really pay off in the future for both you and the employee.
- ▶ **Knowledge.** Knowledge provides understanding. When employees have the correct knowledge, they understand their jobs better and have the ability to perform at a higher level.
- ▶ **Education.** Is a lack of education negatively affecting someone on your team? Many companies offer tuition assistance. There are many positions only available to those with degrees. Take a look at your employees' educational backgrounds and offer advice.
- ▶ **Visibility.** Many great employees are stuck in a cubical all day and no one realizes how amazing they are. ***Find ways to make your employees more***

well-known to others in the company.

- ▶ **Capitalize on an employee's strength.** Put that strength to good use. You'll give them a chance to shine and be the recipient of excellent work.
- 5. **Delegate responsibilities.** Employees grow by taking on new and additional responsibilities. Cater to their strengths and weaknesses when assigning tasks.
- 6. **Take out the trash quickly.** Get rid of poor employees quickly. Nothing lowers the collective standard of the team faster than allowing a subpar member to stay. Expect that everyone be able to carry their own weight. ***Your team deserves the best.***
- 7. **Keep them updated.** Bosses are notorious for communicating poorly and infrequently. Keep your team members abreast of everything that's happening as much as possible.
- 8. **Set a good example.** Be the type of employee you'd like to have. You can't ask others to behave in a way that you're unwilling to behave. Set a great example, and everyone else will follow suit.
- 9. **Care.** You make more money than your employees. They won't care more than you do. Demonstrate your

passion and enthusiasm.

10. **Determine your employees' goals and help them to achieve those goals.** Does your employee want to become a manager one day? Move into a different group? Find out what each team member wants and develop a plan to help them.

Notice the nature of this advice. ***By helping your employees to excel, you're also helping yourself.*** The more enthusiastic, knowledgeable, skilled, and professional your employees are, the more they can do for themselves and for you.

Even if you're not particularly spectacular at work yourself, you can still have a successful career if you can get the most from your employees. Fortunately, it's good for them, too.

"On average, spending time with your boss is consistently rated as the least pleasurable activity in a given day."

- Tom Rath

How to Thrive at Work

Now that you know how to help your employees, what can you do to enhance your performance and image at work? ***Leading a team can be time consuming, but it's necessary to use any remaining time wisely.*** Develop habits that allow you to work effectively and make your presence known.

Get the recognition you deserve:

1. **Do the things that others don't like to do.** To reach the highest levels of success, it's necessary to do things that others don't enjoy.
 - ▶ Success is rarely about being brilliant or having amazing skills. It's much more about doing what needs to be done, even those things that are disagreeable.
2. **Find ways to stand out and be noticed.** If you're doing great work, but no one knows about it, you're not helping yourself much. Tell your friend in accounting about your successful project in the warehouse.

- ▶ Get involved in company-wide projects. ***Multi-departmental projects are a great way to showcase your abilities to a wider audience.***
3. **Do good work.** Everything you touch should be done well. Avoid developing a reputation for doing things poorly. Instead of just doing enough to meet expectations, always do a little more than expected.
 4. **Prioritize.** Prioritize how you spend your time. Determine what's most important and place your focus there.
 5. **Determine what your boss needs.** Just as your employees are there to help you to do your job, you exist to help your boss. What does he need? Ask.
 - ▶ Satisfying your boss's needs and making him look good can help you look good too.
 6. **Always be prepared.** Be prepared for every meeting. Be prepared for each day. At the end of each day, take a few minutes to review what needs to be done. What do you have to do tomorrow? Make a to-do list that you can use tomorrow.

7. **Know the important people.** There are people in every workplace that stand out. Get to know these people. ***Most importantly, let them get to know you.*** The opinions of certain people carry more weight than others. Ensure that those with power and influence are aware of you.
8. **Show an interest in the lives of your employees and colleagues.** Get to know everyone without getting too personal. There are limits to appropriate topics in the workplace. Make friends and be friendly. Say good morning at the beginning of the day and goodnight at the end.

Do the little things that others aren't willing to do. Doing well at work can be tedious, but 99% of what you need to do to stand out is simple. ***Prioritize your time, satisfy your boss, and make sure everyone knows how great you are.*** You can do that.

"A boss isn't a real boss until he has trained subordinates to shoulder most of his responsibilities."

- William Feather

Conclusion

Being the type of boss that employees love doesn't have to inhibit your career. On the contrary, being a great boss for your employees can greatly enhance your performance at work and your career. The starting point is determining what your boss needs from you.

Build and support your employees so they are better able to help you to service your boss. ***A good boss is able to motivate his employees and create a win-win situation for everyone involved.***

Avoid the belief that you must balance making your employee and your employer happy. You can accomplish both with the right approach.