

Corporate
AdviceCaryn
Walsh

In leadership roles, we look at how well the people (or the team or department) we manage are performing, according to pre-determined goals.

The ongoing review is to work out ways to enhance performance, increase productivity and encourage our people to meet goals when they are not achieving them.

Whilst we expect them to perform the role to the best of their ability, we also expect them to be polite to us, and each other.

What about when you have the boss from hell? The person who greets you sometimes and ignores you at others?

The boss who tells you what to do, but is not prepared to do something themselves?

The same boss who tells the team they want everybody to be 'highly performing' and yet doesn't finish their own work on time.

'No Clue'

A recent study conducted in the USA, found that almost 80 per cent of the employees surveyed identified their boss as a 'lousy manager.'

Seventy per cent of people in that study stated that their immediate superior had 'no clue' as to how to be a good manager or lead people effectively.

Author Harvey Hornstein, Ph.D, estimates that 90 per cent of the US work force has been subjected to abusive behavior by a boss at some time.

He bases his conclusions on a survey of nearly 1000 workers over eight years.

Source: http://www.quintcareers.com/bad_bosses.html

The better the leader, the more engaged the staff

Research informs us that happy employees are more productive and add value to the bottom line. We also know the better the leader, the more engaged staff are.

In a recent study completed by Harvard Business Review on the effectiveness of 2865 leaders in a large financial services company, a direct correlation was found between levels of employee engagement and the overall effectiveness of their bosses. (Judged not just by the employees themselves, but by their bosses, colleagues, and other associates).

The overall finding was that the best leaders were supervising the happiest, most engaged, most committed employees — those who are happier than 92% of their colleagues.

Source: <https://hbr.org/2012/07/how-damaging-is-a-bad-boss>

All the difference

You can throw money, prestige, opportunity and excellent rewards at people to increase their engagement and motivation, but nothing will make a difference if

LEADERSHIP

Working for a 'bad' Boss!

SIGNS TO RECOGNISE THE TYPE OF BAD BOSS AND WHAT TO DO AS AN INDIVIDUAL, A COMPANY

**'Bad' boss checklist**

- ✓ They never greet their people (or only do so occasionally)
- ✓ They get angry quickly and shout and scream
- ✓ They are unpredictable. One moment they are calm, the next fiery
- ✓ They get their people to do what they are not prepared to do themselves
- ✓ They criticise their people publicly
- ✓ They talk about their people to other managers or staff
- ✓ They growl a lot at you!
- ✓ They don't play fair. Different rules for different people!

WHAT YOU CAN DO

It can be very difficult dealing with a difficult or 'bad' boss. Many people find it extremely challenging and upsetting, particularly if the boss is a person who does not listen or show interest in their people. And human capital walks out the door.

As AN ORGANISATION

- Make sure you have a zero tolerance, anti-bullying policy within the Organisation;
- If you are a leader, learn to listen to your people and ask them how they view your behaviour;
- If you run the company and recognise 'bad' bosses in your midst, don't leave them in a leadership role to lose more valuable staff. Either provide coaching and help them to grow in areas of leadership, or encourage them to find a career elsewhere;
- Perform down-up reviews at all levels within your Company, where people down the line are able to assess the performance of those above them;
- Ensure policies and procedures are clear Organisation-wide, about how bullying and inappropriate behaviour will be dealt with.

As AN INDIVIDUAL

- Meet your goals and perform your role well
- Don't be beaten down by your 'bad' boss. You are valuable to the organisation
- Write your thoughts and feelings down
- Act professionally at all times
- Find a positive mentor in the Organisation who can be there to guide you
- Approach your boss calmly and be assertive. Explain the impact of their behaviour on you and that you would like to resolve issues
- Keep a journal of incidents
- Stay in control and act professionally at all times. Even if your boss does not behave well, it does not mean that you don't too
- Keep abreast of other openings within the Organisation and outside of it
- Network
- Don't go and talk to your boss' boss — unless it's the last resort
- No role or job is worth ongoing stress, unhappiness or depression. Find another job, where people will value you and want you to be part of their team

The 6 Bad Boss Types

It can sometimes be confusing to work out exactly what your Boss does that drives you crazy. This can be because their behaviour is unpredictable and, depending on their mood, you 'never know what you are going to get.' Six types of difficult or 'bad' bosses have been identified.

THE ALWAYS ANGRY BOSS

- This Boss is always unpleasant to be around. They are often unpredictable. Calm one moment, they explode the next! Working with them feels like you are always walking on egg-shells. When will the next outburst occur?

THE COMPLETELY CLUELESS BOSS

- This kind of Boss has no idea what they are doing, or how to do it, but are very good at pretending they do. They are known for making their people do the work, then, taking credit for a job well done, when projects are completed on time by their competent people. They are poorly-regarded by their troops and fob their way through each day.

THE EVER CRITICAL BOSS

- No matter what you or your team does, nothing is good enough for this Boss. Your work is never good enough, your team does not perform well enough and nobody is doing what they are supposed to. This Boss is this only person who does a good job (in their mind)!

THE TOTALLY DISORGANISED BOSS

- Always late, can't find things, blames others when things go wrong, or goals are not achieved (because they are not organised), this Boss is a nightmare! They often don't achieve their targets and blame their people for being 'under-performers.'

THE 'I'M NICE TO YOUR FACE, BUT TALK ABOUT YOU BEHIND YOUR BACK' BOSS

- Many people believe this is the worst kind of bad boss. They present one thing to you, but do or say another. You cannot trust them to be loyal to you or stand by the team in challenging and difficult times. Many organisations lose valuable employees because of this type of Boss. You often find them high up the corporate ladder.

THE SMILING ASSASSIN BOSS

- Similar to the 'I'm nice to your face' Boss, this character delights in delivering bad news, dividing the troops, maintains power and control by slashing and burning. Distrusted and feared by their people, these bosses lose good people on a regular basis.

they are stuck under a 'bad' boss. People lose motivation and interest — and profitability walks out the door!

A difference of \$250 million

In a study completed in 2000 by Researchers Rucci, Kirn, and Quinn, they identified the 'employee-customer-profit chain' at a leading American organisation, Sears.

This was a straightforward dynamic in which employee behaviour affected customer behaviour, which in turn affected company financial performance.

Specifically, in Sears' case, when employee satisfaction improved by five per cent, customer satisfaction improved by 1.3 per cent, which led to a .05 per cent im-

provement in revenue. That might not sound significant, but for US\$50 billion Sears, this resulted in an extra US\$250 million in sales.

Source: <https://hbr.org/2012/07/how-damaging-is-a-bad-boss-exa>

Employee satisfaction is driven by leadership. A great leader makes significant impact on driving the troops forward.

A bad boss makes significant impact on the troops walking out the door, having secured better employment opportunities else-

where.

Conclusion

Because we spend so much time at work, it is critical that we enjoy what we do and the people with whom we work.

Working under a bad boss can have a significant impact on our health.

Whilst there are various avenues to pursue to attempt to resolve challenging behaviours with our boss, the time may come where we need to walk away from the role and organisation, in search for greater peace and ultimately, sanity.

■ Caryn Walsh is an International Business Consultant, Executive Coach, Keynote Speaker