

# Being a good boss

May 2011



## *The quality of your business management — the difference between surviving and thriving*

What makes a great boss? This top 10 list comes from Leadership Management Australasia, a training company who asked 3000 employees to list ideal characteristics in a manager.

These employees would ideally like a boss who:

- 1. Trustworthy and open in approach**—someone who displays integrity, motivates others, and is competent—the right capabilities, skills, results, and track record.
- 2. Clearly communicates where we are going**—trouble often comes from how people define the word “communication”. Email isn’t communication—often, that’s just spam. Communication should be *the exchange of understanding*—which is best served when employees are actively engaged in a two-way conversation rather than as victims of a monologue.
- 3. Gives me the space to do my work, but supports me**—this means “back off but be there”. Micromanagement may make insecure bosses feel better, but it makes capable employees feel diminished and stifle creativity.
- 4. Listens to and respects my input into decisions**—running random staff surveys doesn’t count. Employees like to be consulted when matters of significance occur in the workplace. This will make them more receptive to change and less likely to resist it.
- 5. Gives regular and honest feedback**—the annual performance appraisal isn’t enough. Many HR professionals believe these are often a waste of time anyway. Immediate feedback provided in a friendly manner is much better.
- 6. Fair and even-handed and makes reasonable demands**—the exact opposite of the Miranda Priestly character (excellently portrayed by Meryl Streep) in *The Devil Wears Prada*.
- 7. Provides the resources I need to do my job**—this may include simple things such as stationery, training material, and client information. It may also include more substantial objects like laptop computers and company cars.
- 8. Recognises me for extra efforts and results**—in a recent Australian survey of 3,000 employees, one-third were planning on resigning in the next year, and a big reason for this is that 40% of survey participants didn’t feel appreciated by their employer.
- 9. Coaches and develops me**—in another Australian survey, 66% of employees said they want the opportunity to develop their skills at work, but only 40% were given the opportunity.
- 10. Trusts me with challenging work**—there’s that trust word again. It’s a lack of trust that turns bosses into micromanagers stops them from seeking feedback.

Adapted from James Adonis “What Makes a Good Boss”  
www.stuff.co.nz, 21 January 2011

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*Winston Churchill*

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