

Bulletin Board: The bad, the good and the great

by Amy_Winter

Would you say your boss is bad, good or great? Leigh Buchanan Inc. magazine's editor-at-large, says several practices separate a so-so boss from a great boss. A good boss needs to be patient and fair. It requires even more effort to be considered great.

Here are some of Buchanan's findings:

- Bad bosses tend to forget that everyone sees things from his or her own perspective; they only look at the big picture. Great bosses consider different point of views.
- Bad bosses make employees feel dumb for making questionable suggestions. Great bosses can take a bad idea and make it smarter, leaving the employee with the satisfaction of creating a marketable option.
- Bad bosses don't take the time to reward employees for completed projects. Great bosses are aware of the duties of each employee and show appreciation for individuals.
- Bad bosses stick around and stay in employees' faces. Great bosses try to avoid constantly hanging around in the background; they mingle with employees when needed.
- Bad bosses can't recall important elements in employees' lives. Great bosses pay attention and try to remember employees' hobbies or children's names.

Buchanan recommends that bosses explore books highlighting unfavorable characteristics for management. They just might recognize themselves.

For more information, visit www.inc.com.

HOW TO HANDLE DIFFICULT CO-WORKERS

Some employees find it hard to be buddies with co-workers, especially when it comes to dealing with

unprofessional behavior. Twenty-nine percent of respondents report they have to work with someone who is rude or unethical, according to Officeteam, a staffing service that questioned 532 full- and part-time workers. And 59 percent of workers say their impolite colleagues are equally obnoxious to subordinates, superiors and peers.

It becomes especially difficult when employees have to use their own interpersonal skills to deal with rude co-workers. Not all supervisors can prevent conflict among employees. Twenty-three percent of workers believe their bosses weren't successful in trying to put a stop to offensive co-workers.

"Most employees will counter an unpleasant colleague at some point, and how they interact with these co-workers can affect their careers," says Diane Domeyer, executive director of OfficeTeam. "Tactfully handling challenging personalities requires strong interpersonal skills and diplomacy, which can help someone stand out for the right reasons."

Older workers might have more tolerance dealing with bad behavior in the workplace, compared to younger employees. Thirty-five percent of respondents 65 years or older think co-workers should bear with unpleasant colleagues as long as the work is getting done.

OfficeTeam gives tips to deal with the most common kinds of challenging co-workers:

- The belittler: Puts others down in order to bring himself or herself up, using humiliating comments and put-downs. Tip - Remain confident and state facts to disprove criticisms.

- The credit thief: Steals ideas and gains the credit when a project is done well. Tip - Record your accomplishments and projects. Hand your manager up-to-date reports.

- The saboteur: Attempts to make others look bad by making it difficult to perform tasks. Tip - Report the roles and duties of each team member to the manager; progress reports may also be a good idea.

- The rumormonger: Thrives on drama by telling lies or fabricating the truth. Tip - Steer clear of workplace gossip. Try to say only positive things about co-workers around the rumor-maker.

- The slacker: Gives tasks to other co-workers and pretends to be "too busy" to assist others. Tip - Write down the responsibilities of each group member so the person has to do his or her tasks.

For more information, visit www.officeteam.com.

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