

5 Ways to Get Your Boss to Be More Supportive

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So you've got a crappy boss, huh? We've all been there.

No matter if it's a supervisor, a manager, an editor, or a board of directors, we all have someone we're responsible to in our jobs. The type of relationship you have with your boss can be the difference between a successful, productive work environment and a stifling, stressful one. This relationship is a two-way street—even if your boss doesn't originally show you the appreciation you look for, you have the power to change that.

According to the research of Liz Wiseman, president of the Wiseman group, a leadership research and development center in Silicon Valley, there are two types of managers: “diminishers” and “multipliers”. Diminishers underutilize the human capital around them by selfishly fixating on their own ideas and always needing to have the last word. On the other hand, Wiseman says that multipliers “find other people's genius and engage it.”

Find your boss's potential to be a multiplier by using these 5 simple tips:

1. **Be realistic**

Many conflicts and misunderstandings can be avoided by simply being realistic about your time and your abilities. The better you know your own work habits and are clear about communicating them, the stronger the relationship you will have with your boss. Also, be clear about your objectives and accomplishments. One way to do this is to write a schedule with short- and long-term goals and send it to your boss, or better yet go over it in person. Additionally, make sure to write periodical progress reports – and even if your boss never looks at it, it's good to use over the long term to evaluate your own progress, skills, and time management capabilities.

2. **Don't be afraid to ask for support- but do so at critical junction points**

Asking for support from your boss requires a delicate balance. On the one hand, it can be perceived as annoying or needy if you are constantly asking questions about every minute detail. On the other, you don't want to keep your boss in the dark about what you're doing. Instead, Wiseman recommends to ask for advice at critical points where you can leverage your boss's skills. “If she has a critical eye, could you use her to help diagnose an underlying problem in a project?” Wiseman suggests.

3. **Ask if there's more help you can give**

Let your boss know that you can go above and beyond what you've been asked to do. But also be clear about your boundaries – prioritize your work before offering to help more. And make it a point to clearly delineate between work tasks and personal tasks. Helping your boss prepare for a meeting is valuable help, whereas you should stray away from helping your boss with their dry-cleaning or coffee habit

4. **Demand feedback**

Don't shy away from asking your boss honest feedback about your progress. Although it may sting at first, allowing yourself to take criticism can both improve your personal performance and create a more open relationship with your boss.

5. **Know your boss's preferences**

Be direct in asking what your boss is looking for. Is there a certain type of software they prefer for you to use, or a certain format for presentations? Save the guessing game and ask at the outset of a project.