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T504: Managing Up: What No One Tells You About Managing Your Boss

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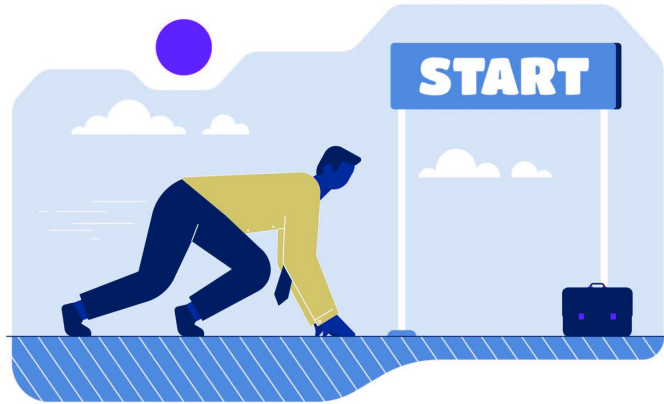
Learning Objectives:

By the end of this session, participants will learn...

1. Tips on how to best “manage” your boss to aid them in their success.
2. Tips on how to best “manage” your boss to aid them in your success.



Managing Up Introduction:



**Definition &
Importance**

**Effective
Communication**

What is “Managing Up”?



Definition: the process of building and maintaining a positive, productive relationship with your boss.

Importance: understanding how to manage up is key for career growth, achieving team objectives, and enhancing your work environment.

Effective Communication in Managing Up



- Be clear, concise, and structured
- Anticipate questions and needs
- Be honest but solution-focused
- Adaptability to team style and preferences
- Be respectful of people's time
- Document and recap
- Build trust through consistency

Learning Objective #1:

Tips on how to best manage
your boss to aid them in
THEIR success



THEIR SUCCESS



Understand their goals/priorities

Make their life easier

Be proactive

Protect their time

Enhance their reputation

Adapt to their work style





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DISCUSSION TIME!



SCENARIO #1:

Working with a micromanaging boss

QUESTION : You've noticed your boss tends to request frequent statuses of your tasks, insisting on check-ins that "could have been an email" and they seem overly tense about deadlines you own.

How do you work with your boss to find a way forward?

Suggestions for Scenario #1:

Working with a Micromanaging Boss

- Try to **understand their behavior**
- **Set clear expectations and boundaries**
- **Communicate** clearly and professionally
- **Build trust** by demonstrating competency



SCENARIO #2:

Managing different workstyles and conflict resolution

QUESTION : Your long-time boss recently retired and the new manager is from outside your organization. After some time, you feel discouraged as their management style has felt a bit “aggressive” and you’ve noticed they are making departmental changes that are causing discord amongst the team.

How do you work with your boss to find a way forward?

Suggestions for Scenario #2:

Different workstyles and conflict resolution

- **Schedule a one-on-one meeting** to discuss work preferences, goals, and how you both operate. Aim towards mutual attunement and alignment that can work for both parties
- **Flexibility is key:** While it's important to express your preferences, it's also important to be adaptable. Work styles can shift over time, especially as projects change or new challenges arise, so frequency of these types of check-ins can vary.



SCENARIO #3:

Working with unclear expectations or inconsistent communication

QUESTION: Your boss assigns you tasks that are urgent and need to be completed quickly, but over time the deadline keeps shifting—some getting delayed or pushed forward without any explanation. You start to question the accuracy of the deadlines and priority levels you being tasked with.

How do you work with your boss to find a way forward?

Suggestions for Scenario #3:

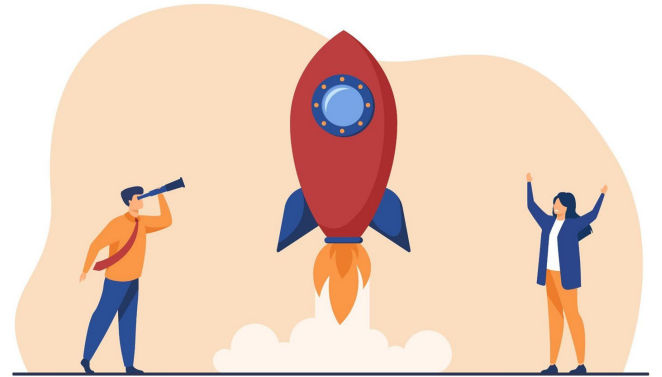
Unclear expectations or inconsistent communication

- **Open Communication:** If you're struggling due to unclear expectations, communicate that
- **Propose Solutions:** propose solutions or offer suggestions on how to improve communication.
- **Stay Proactive:** Try to anticipate potential issues and keep the lines of communication open so you can act quickly when expectations shift.



Learning Objective #2:

Tips on how to best manage
your boss to aid them in
YOUR success



YOUR SUCCESS



Build trust and rapport

Demonstrate value

Provide upward feedback (tactfully)

Ask for stretch opportunities

Educate them on how you work best

Be clear on your goals

SCENARIO #1:

Feeling overworked and misunderstood?

QUESTION: Lately your workload feels unbearable with multiple competing priorities and deadlines that are getting hard to manage. You feel like no one understands what you are dealing with, being pulled in every direction.

How do you work with your boss to find a way forward?

Suggestions for Scenario #1:

Feeling overworked and misunderstood?

- **Regular Check-ins:** Use meetings to align on goals, offer insights, ask advice, seek feedback, and discuss progress.
- **Manage Time and Expectations:** Be clear on your priorities, keep focused on critical items, say no or negotiate deadlines, and seek alignment
- **Offer Solutions, Not Just Problems:** Be solution-oriented when discussing issues. Present recommendations or alternatives when raising concerns.



SCENARIO #2:

Feeling stagnated, seeking promotions and/or new opportunities?

QUESTION: You have started feeling stagnant in your role of late, and are chasing either a promotion or new opportunities for yourself.

How do you work with your boss to find a way forward?

Suggestions for Scenario #2:

Stagnated, seeking promotions, or new opportunities?

- **Seek Feedback and Continuous Improvement:** Ask for feedback on your work performance and how you can support your manager better. Be open to constructive criticism and continuously evolve.
- **Show Initiative and Drive:** Take ownership of tasks and projects. Identify skill sets and knowledge gaps, and work with your boss to define clear pathways & metrics on how to achieve the next level. Demonstrate leadership qualities even when not in a leadership position.



SCENARIO #3:

Noticing a lack of coordination, inefficient processes, and miscommunication?

QUESTION : You have noticed a lack of coordination, inefficiencies and miscommunication with the people and processes you need to get your work done.

How do you work with your boss/stakeholders to find a way forward?

Suggestions for Scenario #3:

Noticing a lack of coordination, inefficient processes, and miscommunication?

Take the lead in building a strong support network:

- **Establish relationships** with other departments, faculty, and teams to stay informed and transparent of each others challenges and needs—leads to valuable exchange of insights and assistance.
- **Take ownership of complex collaborations** that support multi-stakeholder goals, escalate tougher more complex issues to your boss as needed and drawing on their insight and connections to brainstorm solutions.



Final Thoughts

Managing up is about **building a partnership** that **benefits both you and your boss**, leading to greater success and fulfillment.

By managing up effectively, you contribute not only to **your success** but also to the **success of your supervisor, team, and organization**.



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THANK YOU! QUESTIONS?

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