

## Have a great relationship with the boss

By Harvey Mackay

*Jim came into the office one morning and found a note from his boss, demanding that he report to her office right away. When he walked in, the boss told him to close the door.*

*"Jim, I understand you called in sick yesterday," the boss said.*

*He nodded. "That's right."*

*The boss smiled, reached into her desk, and took out the morning's newspaper. Buried on the back page of the sports section was a photo of Jim, holding a third-place trophy in a local golf tournament that had been held the day before. "What do you have to say for yourself?" the boss asked.*

*Jim shrugged. "If I hadn't been sick, I probably would have won."*

Your relationship with your boss is crucial in business. A good relationship with your boss is the foundation of a successful career. Your boss is the person most likely to recognize your contributions and achievements, and potentially recommend you for promotions. Why would you compromise that?

In Jim's case, he demonstrated that he was dishonest, disrespectful, or both. His boss will have good reason not to trust him. Should he have been forthcoming about the reason for his absence? Absolutely, if he wants his boss to rely on him.

He should have asked for time off, used a vacation day or skipped the golf outing. Calling in sick was a gamble that didn't pay off for him. And it will taint his relationship with his boss for a very long time.

Don't try to be best friends. That's not realistic or even wise. But you must be able to get along. Some conflicts may be inevitable, but most of the time you can stay on your manager's good side by avoiding these simple workplace mistakes:

- Don't allow your personal life to take over your work. Use good judgment about phone calls and social media at work. Let the boss see you focused on your work, not updating your Facebook status throughout the day. Remember why you are there, and who is signing your paycheck.
- Frequent tardiness/absenteeism. Don't get a reputation for always being late to work. Managers want people they can depend on. Punctuality and a solid attendance record show you take your job seriously.
- Overshadowing your boss. When you do a good job, you get noticed. Some managers can feel threatened by employees with a high profile. Keep doing your best, and don't try to outshine your boss.
- Poor communication. Don't hide from your managers. Ask questions, and just talk sometimes. You want to build positive rapport with your boss, and you can't do that if you never communicate.

On the flip side, there are plenty of positive strategies that should be second nature in your business life. Don't just save them for your boss. Treating co-workers as well as you treat your boss will demonstrate that you are not just playing office politics.

- Ask for advice. Everyone likes to be thought of as an expert, and in most offices, it's not hard to spot the expert in any given area. Asking for help shows you value the other person's contribution to the success of the operation.
- Let the other person win you over. Admit that you have come around to their way of thinking.
- Let the person be modest. We all love to hear praise, but we don't want to admit that we're enjoying it. When you pay a compliment, acknowledge their feelings.
- Show that you share his or her values. Express your support for the other person's viewpoint.
- Recognize achievement at all levels. Managers will be suspicious of your motives if they hear you complimenting only higher-ups. Make a point of praising your own employees, or your co-workers, to demonstrate your sincerity.
- Be selective. No one wants a reputation as a kiss-up. Wait until you spot something significant to call attention to so your words sound sincere.

Always pull your weight. Nothing will impress your boss and co-workers more than knowing that you will do your share and then some. Demonstrate a stellar work ethic, a positive attitude, and a willingness to go the extra mile. There will always be a place in this world for anyone who says, "I'll take care of it." And then does it!

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