

## Learn to be a better boss

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We've all heard of Mothers Day, Fathers Day, and even Administrative Professionals day, but what about Boss Day?

That's right, today, Oct. 16, is National Boss Day – finally, a day dedicated to recognizing YOU.

But do all bosses deserve appreciation? Perhaps not.



We spoke with Bill Behn, National Director of Staffing for SolomonEdwardsGroup, a national CFO services firm, to learn what makes him (and others) a good boss. There's a lot to learn.

### **Q: What makes a good boss?**

**A:** *"Here's how my guys feel exactly about me: They think that their whole life is an episode of The Office and I am Steve Carrell."*

*"[That's the] thing that keeps me having zero turnover ... [Be] real and self-effacing. You have to be super sincere [and show] that you care about your employees individually. You have to lay yourself out there, make fun of yourself, and make fun of them. But when anything important is going on, you have to be sincere. [That way,] people will know you care about them."*

### **Q: How do you manage to be both funny and serious?**

**A:** *"It's about consistent behavior ... I'm serious when we need to be serious, and my*

#### **Ten Tips:**

- Be sincere.
- Be consistent.
- Understand the values and culture of your organization.
- Don't be afraid to be funny.
- Know when to be serious.
- Learn to forgive and forget.
- Stay approachable.
- Know what's going on around you.

*behavior manages their expectations. I'm not a passive-aggressive boss."*

*"I also love to poke fun at myself and take [their poking fun at me] in stride. People ... have to be themselves."*

- Maintain office traditions.
- Don't be a seagull. (See last question)

**Q: So what makes a bad boss?**

**A:** *"The worst bosses are rash decision makers. They're reactionary."*

**Q: How do you manage distinct groups of people?**

**A:** *"The first key is to manage individuals, not a groups or an office. I'll give on-the-floor coaching in front of everyone, but I'm never going to dress someone down in public."*

**Q: What about respect?**

**A:** *"To me a good organization, a good boss, understands his or her values clearly. When I'm home reprimanding my children, it's the same as it is here at work. I'll take them aside and tell them that it was dumb, and "don't let it happen again."*

*If you've done a good job, or if you've raised your kids properly, you forgive and forget. But that 1% where it's severe ... I'm not afraid to walk someone to the door."*

**Q: What about when you're having a bad day?**

**A:** *"My people have to deal with me occasionally being stupid. The best way to deal with me is to ... not deal with me."*

*But if you had a boss where this happened all the time ... I'd log in and find a new job."*

*You have to know your employees ... I have one that I just don't talk to before noon on a Monday, and that's fine."*

**Q: How should employees act towards their boss?**

**A:** *"Don't be a suck up. People have to take the time to [learn their boss] and adjust."*

*Feel free to walk into your boss' office and bring problems (and suggestions) but if I'm a good employee I would handle things at the peer level first."*

**Q: How else do you keep your employees happy?**

**A:** *"I like tradition. We have a weekly Monday morning meeting, and I bring bagels ... even if no good comes out of [the meeting,] I want to know what's going on."*

*"Also, it's never about me. People will notice if you never spotlight anyone but yourself."*

**Q: What's your management style?**

**A:** *"You don't have to micromanage, but you have to be there when people need you. I want people to know that I'm always in the game. I may not be the first one in – I'm a single dad with three kids – but I'm the last to leave."*

*I encourage my employees to get in on time, do their stuff, and leave at 3, 4, 5 o'clock. I don't want them to miss their kid's soccer games. And I mean that."*

**Q: Great. Any last words?**

**A:** *"Seagull management is not the way to go. Do you know what that is? It's where your boss"*

*comes out of the office occasionally, making a lot of noise and crapping on everybody. Don't do it."*