

Find ways to get along with your difficult boss

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Clashes and difficulties communicating with your boss can be avoided if you understand their personality style and how to deal with them, according to behavioural specialist, Nathan Chanesman.

Chanesman, the founder and CEO of assessment firm [MyProfile](#), says a difficult boss is one of the main reasons people leave a job and that the problems are usually caused by a clash of personalities.

The key to a good working environment, he says, is to identify and mirror your boss's personality style.

Driver bosses

If your boss tells you what to do, how they want it done, and that they want it done 'now', they're probably a 'driver' boss, Chanesman says. These bosses tend to underestimate the time it takes to do something and the work required.

Driver bosses are control freaks who make decisions quickly. They micro-manage and ask for reports they don't read. They raise their voice, have a quick temper and often lack people skills, he says.

To keep them on your side, Chanesman says:

- Be direct. If you don't think you can do it on time, say so. Let them know when it will be done. Be positive.
- Keep your communication businesslike; stay away from gossip and don't use emotional terms.
- Keep your communication factual and brief. Use bullet points and avoid lengthy emails, reports or conversations. Stick to the facts - short and sweet.
- Give your boss choices and let them decide. You provide the options.
- Have up-to-date information at your fingertips. Don't say you don't know - instead, say you'll get right back with the answer.
- Provide action plans and get things done - don't complain or make excuses. Take the blame if it's your fault and move on.

Promoter bosses

'Promoter' bosses look to the future more than the past or present, and are always enthusiastic and bubbly with lots of ideas.

Chanesman says these bosses want to make the job fun. They're social people who work in teams, often run late for meetings and are disorganised. They avoid details and just see the big picture. They're also flashy dressers, use emotional language and wave their arms about. They're easily distracted and make decisions based on how they feel.

To keep on good terms with a promoter boss:

- Promoters rush from one idea to another, so get them to slow down and consider your proposal.
- The best way is to have a single sheet summarising your ideas and what you would like done and by when.
- Present them with a plan and a list of things that need doing.
- Assure them that you are there to help and support their ideas.
- Be enthusiastic and positive, as promoters value people who are.
- Be prepared to listen - promoters love to express their ideas.

Supporter bosses

If your boss sticks with practical procedures and systems, and they're predictable and do things in a steady unhurried manner, they're likely a 'supporter' style of boss.

These bosses take their time and can often be unsure or indecisive. They try to keep the peace. They're easily persuaded and tend to take a conservative middle-of-the-road approach. They're likeable people, always ready to help and are dependable.

They're also patient listeners who don't get upset. They have good administrative skills and are good at working under pressure, and they always try to do things the easy way.

Chanesman says that to keep this boss on your side:

- Be on time to meetings.
- Don't talk loudly and avoid arguments.
- Be considerate and don't attempt to rush, push or corner them.
- Give them time to decide.
- Have your reports or presentations well organised with all facts to support your position.
- Communicate with them often - stay in regular contact no matter how brief.
- Supporters prefer simplicity so an email or text can be easier than meeting.

Analyser bosses

An analyser boss, Chanesman says, is the kind of person who does everything by the rules. They are usually serious and conservative in their views and the way they dress.

These bosses are perfectionists who want everything done absolutely right, and they set high standards. They are picky and anal about things and get moody.

They are also unsociable and introverted and have trouble dealing with people issues, Chanesman says. They are hard to please, can lack a sense of humour and fail to see the funny side of a situation. They prefer to work alone.

To maintain a good working relationship with this type of boss:

- Be on time; in fact be early.
- Be prepared and have all the data and information at your finger tips.
- Present in an orderly, non-emotional manner. Give them time to consider.
- Be business like and deal only with facts. Avoid going off track and stick to the issue.
- Ask for their assistance in solving problems and for their expert knowledge.
- Put things in writing.
- Accuracy and detail are more important than emotion so keep discussions factual.