

Tire News



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What Kind of Boss Are You?

Did You Learn from the Boss Who Made Your Job Happy, or Horrible?

Did you ever have a boss who made your life miserable? I think we all did. But now that you're in charge, do you ever wonder if *your* employees are telling horror stories about *you*?

The poet Robbie Burns asked for the ability to see ourselves as others see us. Take a look at your shop, your employees and at yourself. What kind of boss are you? Are you seeing any of these in your leadership style?

The Thermostat

This boss "sets the temperature" for the shop each day. If he's in a good mood, everything will go smoothly, but if he arrives in a foul frame of mind, then everybody better tiptoe around him. Don't think the customers don't notice it, too. Everybody has off days, but good bosses don't let their personal feelings dictate everyone else's mood.

The Short Fuse

Flying off the handle only gets people upset, and doesn't solve anything. If you can't keep your temper under control, consider taking an anger management course. Shouting at employees doesn't just cause problems with your staff—customers often won't return to a shop where there's a lot of conflict.

The Hanging Judge

I worked in a shop where the outcome of disputes was simple: the winner was the first employee to complain to the boss. Decisions should only be reached after you've heard both sides of the story.

The Rock of Gibraltar

Like that unwavering landmark, this boss doesn't budge. Are you doing something

a certain way because it's the best way to do it, or simply because no one's going to tell you otherwise? I worked at a shop one hot, dry summer where an ice-cream truck stopped by 15 minutes before afternoon break each day. The techs wanted to buy treats, but the boss was adamant: he'd set break time at 3:30, and so he chased the truck driver away—rather violently, and in front of customers, when the man argued. Changing the break to 3:15 wouldn't have disrupted the shop's schedule, and would have made the technicians happier and more comfortable.

The Octopus

This boss has to have a micro-managing hand in everything, no matter how minor. I had one when I handled claim reimbursements: not a single piece of paper was allowed to come to my desk until he'd looked it over. Since he also placed similar demands on every other employee, the papers piled up waiting for him. When he was fired a few months later, I was finally able to process over \$250,000 in receivables that I hadn't been able to claim, since they'd been locked in his desk waiting for him to find the time to look at them.

The Luddite

I've seen bosses walk by ringing phones—not because it's beneath them to pick up the receiver and talk to a customer, but because they have no idea how a multi-line phone works and don't know how to answer it. Just ask: someone will be

glad to show you how to work the paging system, or how to put paper in the printer when it's empty.

The Too-Secret Admirer

Yes, getting paid and not getting fired can be proof that an employee is doing a good job, but a little praise costs you nothing, and goes a long way. You shouldn't heap accolades every time a worker does something right, but acknowledging a job well done can really boost morale.

The Best Friend

It's possible to get too chummy with your staff. It can cause resentment toward your "favourite," or make it tough when discipline is required. Don't be too aloof, either. Remember that boss who did such a great job, and made you *want* to work hard for him. That's the kind of boss you want to be. ■

