

Navigating Relationships Within Organizations

by Sophia



WHAT'S COVERED

Do you ever get nervous around certain types of people? Have you ever been starstruck, like meeting a celebrity for the first time? Can you imagine working with someone like this every single day? Well, being starstruck in a management relationship is not that uncommon. You want to do well around the boss and you want to have a good relationship with him or her. This tutorial will cover navigating relationships within organizations. Our discussion breaks down as follows:

1. Boss Relationships

Having a good relationship with your boss is absolutely critical for your professional success. This is the person who's in charge of the work assignments that you get. The boss also makes recommendations for promotions, and if you recall, is the person who's helping you get to that next step in your career.

Now, in order to have a good relationship with your boss, you want to make sure that you're responding and relating well with your boss--or bosses, for that matter. You want to be the one who's the go-to person and someone your boss can talk with comfortably. This isn't always easy, but if you're going to have a good boss relationship, you want to make sure you're responding and relating well with your boss.

You will also tend to work harder for a good boss. Employees who have good relationships or good reputations with their bosses tend to work harder, so this is actually a win-win for both of you. He or she sees your hard work, and are rewarded by the work that you put in.

It's important to learn from the bosses and other people with prior experience that you may lack. A lot of times, the problems that you encounter are brand new or vexing, or simply hard to figure out, but these other people may have seen them before. They may actually be able to offer you tips on how to get through this particular problem.



HINT

It's also important to remember that you're not just learning from the good things that bosses do, but also from some of the things that you may not agree with. It's important to look at both sides and absorb those lessons every day.

It's important to accept challenges from the boss. Don't immediately throw them off or assume it's too much work. "That's not my job" is a perfect way to ruin a career. When your boss hands you a challenge, accept it

and try your best to excel at it.

Lastly, you want to make sure you're receiving positive feedback, and negative feedback, too. Nobody is perfect; sometimes we do a great job, and other times we might make mistakes. When the boss comes to you and gives you negative feedback, remember that it's not personal. Bosses are trying to make sure that you can do your job well, and without that negative feedback, you might not know what's wrong with the job that you're doing. Therefore, it's important to accept the feedback--both the positive and the negative.

2. Comfort Around Higher Management

Of course, you always want to be comfortable around higher management, but you also want to be professional. Here are some of the ways you can do that:

- *Act naturally, yet professionally:* Be yourself. Don't try to be someone you're not in front of the bosses, because they'll likely see through it. At the same time, though, be professional. These are not necessarily your best buddies or the people that you hang out with on the weekend--they're the bosses or, in some cases, your boss's boss. Therefore, you always want to temper the natural with professionalism.
- *Present to senior managers without being overly nervous:* Remember, you're there to do a job, and they're the ones who handed you that job in the first place. They're expecting a good job and want to hear what you have to say. So, don't be so nervous that you can't function. You need to put your nerves aside and present to the senior managers in a way that reflects well on you and your department.
- *Understand how senior managers think and how they work:* Now, senior managers take a big picture, 30,000-foot view of the organization. They don't have time to see every small detail. That is where you come in--to take care of those smaller details so that they don't have to. Senior managers also tend to be very busy. Time is a precious commodity for them. Therefore, when you get a chance to present or talk to the senior managers, understand that they don't have a lot of time to hear every small detail. They want to see that larger picture view.
- *Create approaches that will meet their needs:* In doing this, make sure you're using the language that senior managers use. If you create approaches that meet their needs in a language that they can understand and appreciate, it's will be seen as a positive outcome--not just for them, but also for you.



BIG IDEA

When you get a chance to see and present to the senior management, be natural, but professional. Don't be overly nervous, and present things in a way that matches how they think and work--matching their language and their needs.



SUMMARY

Today we learned about **boss relationships** and how it's very important, especially professionally, to have a good working relationship with your boss. We also learned about how to achieve **comfort around higher management**, discussing those things that you can do to make sure that you're an asset, not a distraction, when you get a chance to talk to those senior managers.

Good luck!

Source: adapted from sophia instructor james howard