



# Pennsylvania Association of Financial Aid Administrators

## MANAGING UP

### HOW TO HAVE A POSITIVE RELATIONSHIP WITH YOUR BOSS

*Heidi Sisson*

*First Marblehead Corporation*

# Disclaimer

The purpose of this presentation is to provide some suggestions for how to improve your relationship with your boss in the workplace. The information contained herein represents the opinion of its author and should not be relied upon as professional advice. If you are having serious issues with your boss, you should contact the appropriate person within your institution.

# What is Managing Up?

manage up

verb (**intransitive, adverb**) | **(informal)**

To build a successful working relationship with a superior, manager, or employer

From Dictionary.com

# 7 Strategies to Manage Up

From Author and Speaker Margie Warrell

- Know their “why” – identify prime motivations
- Support their weakness
- Take the high road
- Speak up – give them time to respond
- Don’t be intimidated by a bully – stand tall and never cower
- Be proactive – do your research
- Know their preferences and adapt to them

# Common Boss Types

from the book *Managing Your Manager*  
by Gonzague Dufour

# The Bully

- Hates surprises – needs to be in control
- Unexpected outbursts of anger
- Uses fear to intimidate
- Berates others to look good
- Consistently delivers good results
- Strong self-confidence; handles a crisis well
- People tend to respect b/c he says what he thinks - even to his boss

# How to Manage a Bully

- Don't take it personally
- Try to find the humor
- Realize it's temporary
- Avoid surprises
- Be a source for news & information
- Build alliances for them – not good at relationship building

# How to Manage a Bully, cont.

## DO

- The tasks he hates/isn't good at
- Deliver measurable and meaningful tasks that make him look good
- Be self-controlled, flexible and subtle

## DON'T

- Be a “yes” man – wants someone with spunk
- Get labeled – adapt your behavior to the situation
- Let him see you sweat, scream or cry



# The Good

- Easy to deal with personally
- Maintains a personal – professional separation
- Is very patient and predictable
- Does not think outside of the box
- Is a good manager, not great
- Does what makes sense – boring
- Accepts people as they are

# How to Manage the Good

- Be consistent
- Be open and honest – hates office politics
- If bored, come up with projects for yourself
- Don't show your anger or boredom – wants his people happy
- Help him make connections – aren't great networkers
- Do the dirty work – often involves confrontation

# How to Manage the Good, cont.

## DO

- Become a risk manager
- Be authentic – dislikes phonies
- Be the one he can always count on

## DON'T

- Be a risk taker
- Play games or pander
- Be unpredictable or inconsistent

# The Star

- Dramatic – always puts on a show
- High-energy & Dynamic – never boring
- Hates anything that delays action
- Creates excitement but demands a lot
- Loves to challenge the status quo
- Quick to blame and insult
- Vent when things don't go their way

# How to Manage the Star

- Enjoy the ride – embrace the drama
- Take pride in being a part of this team
- Accept that you won't always be able to keep up – no one can
- Do your best and realize it sometimes won't be enough – you are all in the same boat
- Try to steer rather than control
- Be precise and respond quickly

# How to Manage the Star, cont.

## DO

- Be a patient listener
- Ask for help
- Provide post-game analysis, but stay away from pointing out where they messed up

## DON'T

- Talk back
- Be disloyal – very sensitive to this
- Be a wet blanket or a naysayer

# The Parent

- Tends to flourish where calm exists
- Typically promoted from within
- Found in areas such as Finance and Human Resources
- Provides a great deal of guidance
- Always available to answer questions
- Likes to tell others what to do
- May seem resistant to your ideas/suggestions

# How to Manage the Parent

- Set clear limits
- Communicate these limits respectfully and clearly
- Take advantage of the coaching and training
- Communicate what you want help with
- Gather as much knowledge and gain as many skills as possible



# The Geek

- Knows their stuff better than anyone
- Often lacking people skills
- Typically promoted from within
- Prefers using their expertise over managing people
- Very logical and analytical
- Excellent at leading like-minded geeks – struggles with cross-functional teams

# How to Manage the Geek

- Find an effective mode of communication
- Email can be a great way to ask questions and get feedback
- May be better outside the office – go to lunch
- View yourself as an apprentice
- Pay attention – knows things not taught in school
- Ask questions

# Know Yourself

- What can you handle?
- Do you have a thick skin?
- Is this a stepping stone or a long term position?
- Are you able to find humor in almost every situation?

Good Luck!!!