

# FRONTLINE SUPERVISOR

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## MIIA Employee Assistance Program

800.451.1834

### Common Complaints About Bosses

**Q.** What are some of the most common complaints employees make about bosses?



**A.** Common complaints from employees about supervisors include being micro-managed, not listening to me, not being tolerant of a

different opinion, not following through on promises, giving deadlines that are unrealistic and that put too much pressure on me, not having enough time to talk to me, not giving me enough feedback about my performance, and he/she is too disorganized. Except for one issue, the common denominator among these complaints is communication. Only “being disorganized” stands alone. Earlier communication, communicating one’s concerns to the supervisor, being more receptive in interpersonal communication, and asking for more communication from either party would resolve these complaints. Are you able to see how your role in encouraging, seeking out, expecting, and holding employees and yourself accountable for effective communication can create a more harmonious workplace?

### Is It Too Late to Make a Referral?

**Q.** My employee has no job issues, but I am fearful of his return to absenteeism problems and angry mood swings everyone was seeing two weeks ago. Is it too late to make a supervisor referral to the EAP? This same pattern also happened about six months ago.

**A.** No, it is not too late to make a supervisor referral. Your documentation is important, of course. If you are unsure about its wording, consider consulting with the EAP. What you say and how you say it are also important, so consider discussing an effective delivery with the EAP. An EAP Consultant can also help you identify additional key points to include in your constructive confrontation. You have a clear rationale for your meeting with your employee, despite not meeting with him two weeks ago. Motivation for your employee to follow through may be diminished, but an attempt still should be made, because serious personal issues may underlie this type of behavior-performance pattern. The symptoms of many chronic personal problems can be concealed or suppressed temporarily, especially if the fear of not doing so is great.

#### Management Consultation Services

- Employee Performance
- Change Management
- Workplace Trauma
- Conflict Resolution
- Layoff Support
- Lunch & Learn Seminars
- Management Trainings
- Organizational Stress

#### Employee Services

##### Confidential Counseling

- Addiction
- Anxiety
- Depression
- Family Issues
- Stress Management
- Work Concerns

##### Resources & Referrals

- Legal
- Financial
- Child Care
- Elder Care

## “Being Authentic”

Q. I often see references to the importance of “being yourself,” “being authentic,” and “being a real person” as a skill for supervisors. What does that actually mean? Does it mean behaving in a certain way, or adopting a particular attitude?



A. Being yourself, being genuine, being “real,” not pretending to be perfect, or learning how

to be more available emotionally to employees all refer to the same thing: “authentic leadership.” The goal of this dynamic in supervision is to increase the productivity of workers by establishing optimal relationships with them. The idea is to balance professionalism with approachability, friendliness, openness, and affability. The opposite of this dynamic is a supervisor who is physically and/or emotionally remote, detached, and mysterious to his or her employees. This balance is a learned skill. Supervisors vary widely in their ability to do it. Being authentic is not just being nonthreatening to employees, but also being purposeful: the manager can elicit employees to open up to him or her, so that their strengths and weaknesses, personalities, and working styles can be better understood. This in turn allows the supervisor to help each employee maximize his or her potential. This improved relationship with the supervisor also encourages employees to put forth more effort.

## Putting Meaning Back Into Your Work



Q. I hope to be with my employer until retirement, but frankly I am no longer thrilled with what I do. I am bordering on not wanting to come to work. How can I make my job more meaningful and not allow my attitude to affect employees?

A. Two key dimensions of your job include “what you are doing” and “who you are doing it with.” Your job and duties may be static and inflexible, but your relationships are not. Don’t let these relationships suffer—enhancing them is the answer to your problem, and you will be at an advantage for doing so. Greet employees every day and enhance the people dimension of your work. Encourage employees when they are having rough days, and steer them toward their potential. Discover how you can elevate their lot with mentoring and opportunities. See the book “Why Motivating People Doesn’t Work (And What Does),” released in September 2014. You’ll discover powerful insights and new ways of engaging with employees that may help you leap out of bed in the morning. Also, talk to the EAP. Together, you will discover more ways to put meaning back into your job.

MIIA  
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