

## Dealing With Difficult Leaders

This term is kind of an oxymoron because you should not have a difficult leader in your organization. Usually, this is a challenge for managers because leaders are specifically in an organization to help move it forward.

When you have a difficult leader it may be that they have just been promoted and they have a certain way of managing that doesn't work when they become a leader. They may have to be shown the difference, you can't just rely on them working it out for themselves. A difficult leader can be a detriment to your organization because they will turn other employees off and will cause problems for other leaders. They will also create problems with customers because they act as if they do not care about their needs.

Usually these difficult leaders see themselves as in charge of people and are to be considered *the boss* of their area. They've been used to managing, so their first style of leadership is usually 'telling'. Good leaders understand that although they may have the title of boss, they actually are as much a part of a team as anyone else. They also understand that their team performs better when they are included in decisions.

When you encounter a difficult boss, it is a good lesson in tolerance and patience. Although they are the head of your department, they are not above everyone else. You can approach this in a positive way or negative way, the choice is yours. Here are some simple ideas to deal with a difficult leader:

**Keep emotions under control** – when something happens in an office most people want to react and show their emotions. Usually they get angry in the situation, but this is the worst thing you can do with a boss. Instead, get your emotions under control and approach the situation in a calm assertive manner.

**Keep track of situations** - if you are upset about specific things in your department, make a list of these things. Keep track of them with time and date so that you have collected data instead of going towards emotional outbursts. You will be able to present this list in a business like manner.

**Deal with criticism positively** - when a boss criticizes you, use it as an opportunity to be more creative. Look for ways to do your job more effectively and take opportunities to improve in the areas that the boss suggests.

**Change what you can, accept what you can't change** – there is no way for you to change another person. Accept that you can't change them, but you can change yourself or your job.

**Know when it is time to go** – at some point in everyone's life there comes a time when it is time to leave a job and go somewhere else. If you are miserable under the poor leadership of this boss, it is time to look for something different.