

# GET THE JOB

## Dealing With a Difficult Boss

### Strategies for Managing Up Without Losing Your Cool

**N**ot every boss is easy to work with. Some micromanage, others don't communicate clearly, and a few may seem impossible to please. While a challenging supervisor can make daily work more stressful, learning how to manage up professionally can improve the relationship — and help you stay focused on your career goals.

#### **FOCUS ON WHAT YOU CAN CONTROL**

You may not be able to change your boss's behavior, but you can control how you respond to it. Start by learning your manager's style. Do they prefer frequent updates or brief summaries? Are they motivated by results or by process? Understanding their preferences can help you communicate more effectively and reduce tension.

Keep your interactions professional and calm. When issues arise, focus on facts and solutions rather than emotion or blame. For example, if unclear instructions are a problem, ask clarifying questions and follow up with a summary in writing. This creates a paper trail and shows you're taking initiative to get



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things right.

#### **SET BOUNDARIES**

Working under a difficult boss can take a toll, especially if criticism feels personal or expectations keep shifting. It's important to protect your

well-being. Make time to decompress outside of work, talk to a mentor or trusted colleague, and document any serious concerns in case you need to escalate them later.

If your boss is open to feedback, a respectful conversa-

tion may help reset the dynamic. Choose a calm moment, keep the tone constructive and express your desire to work well together. If that's not possible, focus on managing the relationship in a way that lets you continue to

perform and grow.

A difficult manager doesn't have to derail your career. With patience, professionalism and a few key strategies, you can navigate the challenge, maintain your composure and continue moving forward.