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CareerBuilder Survey

One In Seven Workers Give Their Boss a “D” or “F” Grade; Bad Communication Cited

Los Angeles, Calif.—According to a recent [CareerBuilder survey](#), one in seven workers would give their boss a “D” or “F” grade when asked to evaluate their boss’ performance. The survey found that workers whose boss interacted with them frequently gave their boss higher grades. Without frequent communication, your boss might as well be a ghost boss, says [Dr. Noelle Nelson](#), author of [Got a Bad Boss? Work that Boss to Get What You Want at Work](#) (Amazon eBook, \$7.99).

“A ghost boss is a boss who barely acknowledges you at work to the point you wonder if he or she even knows your name. You fumble about trying to figure out what your boss expects from you but he won’t give you any guidance on how to do your job or even what doing a good job would actually mean,” says Nelson.

“These types of bosses have no business being a boss. They’ve been promoted because they were probably great at doing something that didn’t require managing people,” she says. “They now have to manage, but their secret desire is to be left alone to work on whatever pet project piques their interest at the moment. Their secret fear is that they’ll be cornered into having to actually interact with people, which they see as a complete waste of their time and talent.”

So how do you work with a ghost boss? “It’s useless getting angry, aggravated or belligerent with your ghost boss,” says Nelson. “It’s equally useless trying to make-nice, attempting to schmooze or engage a ghost boss in some sort of reality-based management discussion. Instead, in a sense, you need to become your own boss.”

Nelson provides these steps to become self-sufficient and successful at work despite a ghost boss.

- Write out how you would describe, in specifics and detail, each of your duties and tasks.
- Create measurable markers of success for each task, at each stage of its completion or development.
- Review each point with your ghost boss. Given such clear criteria, he or she may actually weigh in with helpful suggestions. If not, don’t worry, you’ve just cleared your “to-do” list with your ghost boss.
- Do your almighty best to accomplish what is on your list. Build in whatever you need to help you stay motivated because you will not get praise for your good work from your ghost boss.
- At the end of each week, show your boss on paper (backed up with an emailed report), the results of your week’s work. As much as a ghost boss may shy away from the face-to-face, face-time is important to reinforce successes.

“One of several things will happen if you consistently follow through with all the above,” says Nelson. “First, you’ll be one of the few in your department or company who can actually get what you need and want from your ghost boss. Second, you may quite inadvertently help your ghost boss learn how to manage. Third, and best of all, someone up the food chain may take notice and you will finally get the chance to move up in the ranks despite your ghost boss.”

For tips on working with specific bad boss types, go to <http://www.noellenelson.com>, on Facebook at www.facebook.com/GotABadBoss or at <https://twitter.com/GotABadBoss>,

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