

WHY YOUR EMPLOYEES SECRETLY HATE YOU, AND VICE VERSA

By Dale Dauten

"I had the meanest boss in the world so I'd call in sick a lot. I would say I had 'female problems.' My boss didn't know I meant her."

-Wendy Liebman

One of the problems with this economy is that if you're lucky enough to have a job, you have to live with the burden of being Lucky to Have a Job. Implicit in being one of the Lucky Ones is "shut up and be grateful", which is no one's first choice in the luck lottery.

Meanwhile, dentists themselves find that they need to give just a bit more effort, to put in a bit more time just to keep the practice even with last year's level. The problem is that they've been doing a bit more, year after year, crisis after crisis for a decade or two.

What got me thinking about the dual-stress of the modern workplace was reading the news reports about job satisfaction stats reaching a new low. So I decided it was time to update my pair of lists of boss-employees annoyances. Let's start with the list of employees' frustrations...

REASONS WHY YOUR EMPLOYEES SECRETLY HATE YOU

- Using the word "teamwork" when you really mean "overwork without complaint or compensation."
- Treating kindness as if it were a scary virus that might spread to others – "If I did it for you, I'd have to do it for everyone."
- Calling to "check in."
- Offering distant and vague rewards: "No promises, but something good is coming."
- Complaining about the cost of repairs for your "Beemer."
- Prattling on about being a team when your real goal is to get a big promotion and leave the team behind.

And, on the other side, let's recall what it is that dentists may find annoying about their staff...

REASONS WHY YOUR BOSS SECRETLY HATES YOU

- Saying "FINALLY!" to any announcement of a positive change.
- Mistaking a thought for an idea, an idea for a proposal and a proposal for an innovation. (An idea is to an innovation what the sex act is to raising a child.)
- Asking for advice when what you really want is to pass off problems or responsibilities.
- Being miserable but not having the guts to do something about it.
- Pretending not to understand.
- Mistaking the boss for a wealthy and gullible relative.
- Reacting to an attempt to the company doing something nice for employees by saying, "I'd rather they just give us the money it cost."

What's the lesson learned here?

What's needed from both sides is to assume the best about the other, even when you know better. Perhaps that's what it means to be a professional: Show up – I mean really show, all in – and force yourself to assume the best (which means you don't get to make that face).

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