

MINDSET MONTHLY

1 October 2013



10 Things Great Bosses Give Employees

Adapted from Jeff Haden

Good bosses care about getting important things done. Great bosses care about their people.

1. Autonomy & independence

Great firms are built on optimizing processes and procedures. Engagement and satisfaction are largely based on autonomy and independence. I care when it's "mine." I care when I'm in charge and feel empowered to do what's right. Freedom breeds innovation: Even heavily process-oriented positions have room for different approaches. Whenever possible, give your employees the autonomy and independence to work the way they work best. When you do,

they almost always find ways to do their jobs better than you imagined possible.

2. Clear expectations

While every job should include some degree of independence, every job does also need basic expectations for how specific situations should be handled. Few things are more stressful than not knowing what is expected from one day to the next. When a great boss changes a standard or guideline, he communicates those changes.

3. Meaningful objectives

Meaningful targets can create a sense of purpose and add a little meaning to even the most repetitive tasks. Without a meaningful goal to shoot for, work is just work.

4. A true sense of purpose

Everyone likes to feel a part of something bigger. Everyone loves to feel that sense of teamwork and esprit de corps that turn a group of individuals into a real team. The best missions involve making a real impact on the lives of the customers you serve. Let employees know what you want to achieve for your business, for your customers, and even your community. Feeling a true purpose starts with knowing what to care about and, more importantly, why to care.

BOOTSTRAP
The Growth Catalyst

5. Opportunities to provide significant input

Engaged employees have ideas; take away opportunities for them to make suggestions, or instantly disregard their ideas without consideration, and they immediately disengage. Make it incredibly easy for employees to offer suggestions. Ask leading questions. Probe gently. Help employees feel comfortable proposing new ways to get things done. When an idea isn't feasible, take the time to explain why. Employees who make suggestions care about the company, so great bosses ensure those employees know their input is valued and appreciated.

6. A real sense of connection

Every employee works for more than a paycheck: They want to work with and for people they respect and admire--and with and for people who respect and admire them. Kind words, an informal

conversation to ask if an employee needs any help--those moments are much more important than group meetings or formal evaluations. A true sense of connection is personal. That's why great bosses show they see and appreciate the person, not just the worker.

7. Reliable consistency

Most people don't mind a boss who is strict, demanding and quick to offer (not always positive) feedback, as long as he treats every employee fairly. Great bosses know the key to showing employees they are consistent and fair is communication: The more employees understand why a decision was made, the less likely they are to assume unfair treatment or favoritism.

8. Private criticism

No employee is perfect. Every employee deserves constructive feedback. Good bosses give that feedback.

Great bosses always do it in private.

9. Public praise

Every employee--even a relatively poor performer--does something well. Every employee deserves praise and appreciation. It's easy to recognize some of your best employees because they're consistently doing awesome things. Maybe consistent recognition is a reason they're your best employees. A few words of recognition--especially public recognition--may be the nudge an average performer needs to start becoming a great performer.

10. A chance for a meaningful future

Great bosses take the time to develop employees for the job they someday hope to land, even if that job is with another company. How can you know what an employee hopes to do someday? Ask. Employees will only care about your business after you first show you care

