

## How to manage your Manager

As the article <https://learning.linkedin.com/blog/learning-tips/managing-your-manager-isn-t-complicated--just-do-these-5-things-> says - Almost everyone has a manager. And, whether you love your manager or [can't stand them](#), research shows they [have a lot of control](#) over both your day-to-day happiness and long-term career growth.

That's why it's so important to manage your manager. All that means is building a relationship with them where they think highly of you, advocate for you and are active participants in advancing your career. You know, no big deal.

Believe it or not, forming that kind of your relationship with your manager isn't that complicated to do (it might be hard, but it isn't complicated).

This article gives us 5 things to do

### **The five things you need to do to effectively manage your manager**

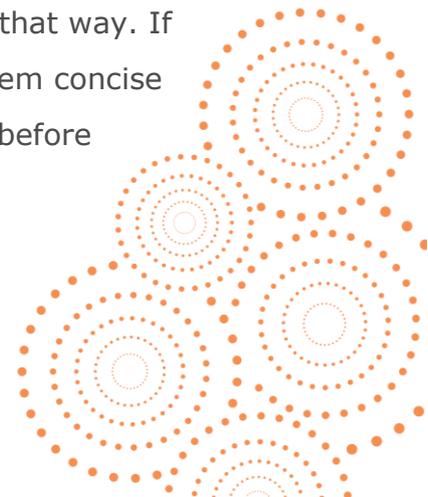
They are:

#### **1. Communicate with your manager the way they prefer to communicate.**

Everyone has a preferred communication channel. For example, some people like to talk face-to-face, whereas others prefer [email](#).

And it doesn't stop there. People have different communication styles as well. Some people like to talk through problems; others prefer to reflect on them alone.

Observe how your boss communicates – and communicate to them that way. If they write concise emails after periods of solitary reflection, send them concise emails. If they prefer scheduling hour-long brainstorming meetings before kicking off a project, do that.



“Whatever (your manager's) preferences, pay attention,” [Dewett said in his course](#).

“Know them. And use them. The more you communicate in a manner that aligns with their natural preference, the better they will hear and process everything you're trying to say.”

## **2. Be tightly aligned with your manager on their expectations for your performance.**

This means understanding how you are being judged by your manager. For example, if you are in sales, maybe it isn't just about the number of sales you close. It's also about the size of those deals, the length of those deals or the companies you are making deals with.

How do you stay aligned here? Communication. Dewett recommends touching base at least once a week with your manager on what they are looking for from you and how they believe you are doing in those areas.

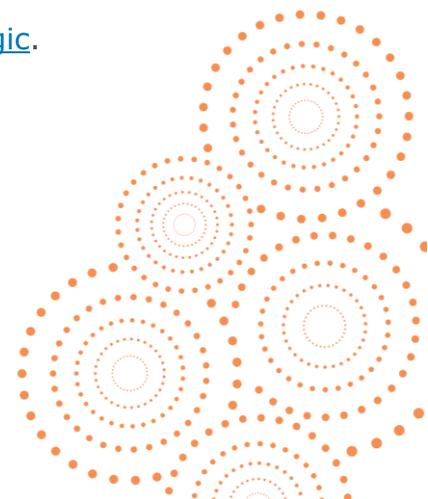
## **3. Know what your manager's goals are.**

It isn't just enough to know how you are being judged. The smartest employees also know [how their manager is being judged](#) and execute on that.

For example, say you work in finance and your job is to crunch numbers and make projections – you are being judged on how accurate your projections are. But you know your manager, and the department as a whole, is also being judged on efficiency.

So, yes, ensure your projections are accurate first-and-foremost. But also challenge yourself to look for areas in the budget where the company could be more efficient and suggest those to your boss – [that'll make you look more strategic](#).

## **4. Perform above-average.**



The most obvious one and the most important one – if you aren't performing above-average, it's nearly impossible to effectively manage your manager, Dewett said.

But, the first three steps are so important to performing well because they determine what performing well looks like. Once you have those [goals](#) clearly defined, it's up for you to execute on them. If you are unable to for some reason, ask for help or seek out training to improve yourself. If you do get help and are still having trouble, it might be time to consider changing roles.

"If you wish to advance, on top of a good personality and a strong work ethic, nothing trumps the power of a clear track record of success," Dewett said.

### **5. Tell your manager about your long-term aspirations, occasionally.**

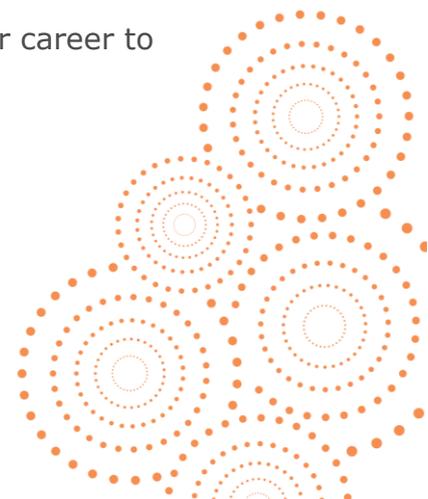
If you aren't performing above-average, skip this step. First, get your performance up, and then do this.

But here's a big reason why you manage your manager in the first place – so they can help you become the professional you want to be. Every couple of months or so (no more, no less, Dewett warned), tell your manager [what your long-term goals are](#): managing a team, moving up, perhaps moving to another department, [whatever](#).

"If you wish to advance, you must be your best advocate," Dewett said. "Don't assume the boss knows your aspirations. Talk about them."

### **Summing it up: Managing your manager comes down to communication**

You'll notice a common thread in these five steps: [communication](#). If you effectively communicate with your manager, you'll know how they are judging you and how well you are doing in those areas. They'll also know where you want your career to go, so they can help you get there.



Following these five steps accomplish that. They also ensure you have a good professional relationship with your manager (even if you don't have much of a personal one) and empower you [to do fewer things, better.](#)

Forbes, in 2018 reviewed the same issue and gave us, this time 10 things to do to manage our boss looking further into the issues around how to deal with the fundamental problem many people have.

<https://www.forbes.com/sites/lizryan/2018/01/28/how-to-manage-your-boss-ten-dos-and-donts/>

Here are ten Dos and Don'ts for managing your relationship with your boss:

1. Do remember that your manager has their own fears, concerns and frustrations. Don't look at your boss as just the person who evaluates your work or who gives out raises and promotions. Look at them as a full person, with a life outside of work, career aspirations, and the wish or hope to be the best manager they can be.
2. Do try to take your manager's point of view whenever possible. Great salesperson and customer service agents take their customers' point of view. Great leaders take their team members' point of view. Great team members take their co-workers' and their manager's point of view. If you want to manage your relationship with your boss you must understand what your boss cares about.
3. Do figure out what is most important to your boss this year. What are his or her performance goals? The more you can support your boss in achieving their objectives, the better your relationship will be.
4. Do acknowledge your manager when they help you, advise you, take care of an issue for you, remember something important you hoped they would remember, and generally support you in doing your job.
5. Do express your concerns, complaints, frustrations and rants -- but in a positive fashion. Take whatever you're unhappy about (e.g., staff meeting minutes almost never get distributed) and turn it into a suggestion (What if we used the first agenda slot at next week's staff meeting to decide how we're going to distribute minutes every week?)
6. Do speak up if your manager is confused or misinformed about your role, goals, results or any other aspect of your work. Clearing up miscommunication with your boss is extremely important and will grow your muscles.
7. When your boss is a pain in the neck, don't take it personally. Most managers get almost no leadership training and very little support. They don't know how to manage their stress, and who can blame



them? Don't take abuse from anyone at work, but if your boss is short with you don't label him or her an idiot or bully or label yourself a failure. Neither is true. You're fine and your boss is fine, and work is a stressful place.

8. When Greg is in his calm mode, reinforce him like crazy. Tell him "This is the kind of amazing brainstorming we need to do before we have to build another one of those customer reports."

9. Think about what you want over the long term, way beyond this job, and how this position will help you reach your long-term goals. You don't have to become best friends with Greg or become his favourite employee. You can rise up in altitude through this experience. You can take charge of your workplace relationships by looking at your role in them!

10. Finally, acknowledge yourself for owning your relationships — because not everybody does. Not everybody can get out of their hurt and fear enough to see how we can all reinforce one another.

### **Ten Don'ts for Managing Your Boss**

1. Don't start a conversation with your boss when you're mad or upset. Wait until you calm down.

2. Don't fall into a win/lose mentality and start counting the number of times your boss said "yes" to one of your requests versus the times they said "No." It is easy to compare yourself to other employees or start to think "My manager doesn't like me." That's a waste of your energy. Focus on your work, your team's work and your mission.

3. Don't go to your manager with a list of complaints. Convert your complaints into practical suggestions whenever you can.

4. Don't ask your boss to adjudicate arguments with co-workers unless you and your co-worker agree there is no alternative.

5. Don't be shy about asking for feedback or asking for advice on a situation you haven't handled before.

6. Don't forget to keep your manager informed of positive things you hear about the team, the company and your manager him-or-herself. Nobody gets enough acknowledgment!

7. Don't assume your boss knows important news you hear or read during the day. If you think the new information would be valuable to your manager, pass it on.

8. Don't bash your manager to other employees, or vice versa.

9. Don't ask your boss to solve tiny problems you could solve on your own.





10. Don't assume that because your manager is different from you — with a different gender, age, nationality or life story — that you can't be real with them. We can all bring more of ourselves to work and it would be good for all of us if we did!

We always need to remember that we are all human and these steps remind us of this point.

Both articles offer great tips and techniques and bring to light the concerns of many colleagues who struggle with their own manager.

NorthWest Employers 2019

