



HRxaminer

Examining practical HR issues business owners
and managers encounter every day

Managing from the Middle



Managers have a sensitive role to play, balancing the role as supervisor and balancing the role as employee. Managing up and managing down.

Most of the time, I talk about the managing down part. How we develop relationships with our employees. How we build our team and set team objectives. How we set individual objectives and hold employees accountable. How we get results and celebrate those

results.

Equally important is ensuring that we have strategically established a solid relationship with our boss and, depending on where we are in the organization, with their boss. How we interact, support and partner with our boss sets the stage for their success, our success, the success of our employees and the success of our organization.

It's time to look up.

Try this exercise. Write (brainstorm) 20+ adjectives that describe your relationship with your supervisor. The first 10+ should be the positives: what is great, makes working with that person fun, productive, motivating, etc. The second 10+ should be the negatives (or as we say in HR, "opportunities for improvement"): where do you typically disagree, what creates stress, what do you wish would work differently.

Study the list.

Of all these relational attributes, what excites you most in your job? What are the key factors in the relationship that keep you from looking for another job? What actions do you take (will you take) to ensure that you strengthen, retain and reinforce these aspects of the relationship?

Next, look deeply at the areas you find more challenging. Analyze this list and ask yourself some key questions, such as: How did it get this way? What part do I play in maintaining this more difficult part of the relationship? What assumptions am I making that get in the way of a more effective relationship? How does this concern impact my effectiveness as a leader? What can I do differently to start shifting these issues? What discussions can I initiate with my boss to strengthen our relationship?

For those of you with fantastic relationships with your boss, this may be an easier exercise. For those of you with a few more challenges, it's not always so easy. Perhaps now is a good time to consider how you can strengthen and celebrate the great parts and consciously and proactively take steps to resolve and minimize those areas that are not working for you (and others).

Supervising Smart Series 2019

April 16 Session: Relationship Building: Buddy to Boss / Boss to Boss

Our monthly training is the 3rd Tuesday of each month (except for September which is the 2nd Tuesday) from 10:00 am – 12:00 am at Hamline University's West End campus near the intersection of Highways 100 and 394.

The cost per session is \$70 per session.

For more information and to register [Click Here](#).

Here's the schedule. Hope to see you there!

- 4/16 Relationship Building: Buddy to Boss / Boss to Boss
- 5/21 Conscious Communication Skills
- 6/18 Strengthening Your Organization with Active Employee Engagement
- 7/16 Effective Employee Coaching and Performance Feedback
- 8/20 Discipline and Documentation: A Strategic Approach
- 9/10 Dealing with Difficult Employees: A Manager's Conundrum
- 10/15 Resolving Workplace Conflict
- 11/19 Handling Employee Terminations
- 12/17 Delegation and Accountability

As you ponder your relationship with your boss, also evaluate the effectiveness of working relationships you have with each of your direct reports. What's working and what's not?

It's likely that there are the commonalities between your managing down and your managing up relationships. Use these up-down commonalities as a starting point for your commitment to strengthen each relationship.

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About Arlene Vernon

Arlene has provided HR consulting and management training services to over 500 organizations since starting HRx, Inc. in 1992.

If you're seeking a hands-on, practical HRxpert to assist your organization with employee relations, policy development, strategic HR activities or fun/doable management training, call on Arlene – Your HRxpert.

If you're planning a conference, seminar or special event, Arlene specializes in keynotes, seminars and workshops to meet your talent management needs. And if you're seeking a more lively entertaining activity, Arlene's custom songs and musical-inspirational keynote may be perfect for your organization!

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