

TOP 10 TIPS FOR MANAGING UP IN A TOP DOWN WORLD

By Roberta Matuson

It may seem unnatural to manage up in the top down world of business but this is exactly what you must do to be successful in business. Here are 10 tips for managing those relationships above you.

- 1. Decode your boss's management style-**I've yet to see a situation where a boss moulds his style to that of his employees. You can be certain you will be the one doing the adjusting. Begin by observing how your manager uses authority, the way he relates to others, and his communication style as a leader. Most bosses typically fall into one of the following categories: Dictatorial, Laissez-faire, Bureaucratic, or Consultative. Once you determine the type of manager you've been handed, you can then study ways to work most effectively with this type of leader.
- 2. Prepare to play the game of politics-**Politics is played in every organization; so the sooner you learn how to play this game, the better off you'll be. Politics is the informal way that things get done in an organization. Pay close attention to how work really gets done in the organization. People who master this game follow unwritten rules that allow them to manoeuvre swiftly through the organization to obtain scarce resources, approval of prized projects and promotions. Can you see now why it's important to master this game?
- 3. Shine the light on others-**Compliment staff in front of others, and whenever possible, shine the light on those around you. The light from their reflection will make you shine brightly.
- 4. Presume good intent-**It's easy to jump to conclusions when you are asked to do something that at first doesn't feel right. Presume good intent. Provide your boss with options on how to achieve the same results in a way that feels right.
- 5. Master the art of influencing-**Influencing is communicating effectively with a goal in mind. Be specific in your request while highlighting why it's in your boss' best interest to comply with your request, and you will be on your way to mastering the art of influence.
- 6. Toot your own horn-**For years we've been taught that it's not polite to brag. But if we don't, how will others know about our contributions? When companies put together lay-off lists, they exclude those whose contributions are well known throughout the organization. You may be the best singer in the room, but no one will know this if you never open your mouth.
- 7. Manage your own performance-**Bosses are busy people and most would rather walk on hot coals than write a performance review. Prepare your own review, which should include ways you've added value to the organization as well as areas needing further development. Present this to your boss a week prior to your review, and don't be surprised if what you get back closely resembles what you've submitted.

- 8. Continually maintain-**Like any connection worth having, you will need to apply care and attention in order for the relationship to flourish. Continual maintenance is the key to sustaining relationships for years to come.

- 9. Hire a mentor or a coach-**Every star player uses a mentor or a coach to help them improve their game. Find someone who is willing to hold up the mirror for you so that you can clearly see what your boss is seeing. Then adjust your style accordingly.

- 10. Attach your star carefully-**You never want to be so closely associated with your boss that you find yourself on the outskirts the moment she is no longer in favour. Be your own person so others know you are more than someone's sidekick.