

Media Article



Vocational Guidance Services

A NEW BOSS

Recently a couple of our multinational clients have seen a 'change of guard' – a new MD arrives to take over in the region. Now, I'm not one to stereotype, and I believe there are as many different types of managers as there are human beings. However, it is amazing how the personality, outlook and vision of a chief in charge can make or break that organization.

Some people with warm and understanding relationships with their bosses dread the arrival of a dictator, and often that sort of transition sees staff fleeing in droves. The other side of the coin is if you have found the boss wanting and indifferent, the arrival of someone new could re-energize not just the company, but also your career.

So, if you are about to see a 'boss-change', how should you manage the transition? Firstly, try to keep an open mind towards the new boss. Speculation in the office will be rife, with gossip on over-drive. Perhaps there will be people in touch with staff in the area of the world, or department, from which this new person is due to arrive. They will be doing their best to 'dig up dirt' on the newcomer with which to scare you and your colleagues. So, try your best to not pre-judge, but form your own opinions when they arrive.

On the boss' first day, treat it like your first day in a new job. Beware of your time-keeping, appearance and manners. It is important that you make the right impression on the new-comer. As an office, your habits will be coming under scrutiny again – so beware those little things you might have gotten away with under the old regime: the times you work, tea breaks, personal phone calls.

Each new boss will want to make their mark. Hopefully, that should not impact on you, if your performance record speaks for itself. In fact, you may be given new responsibility, and this transition could provide an ideal opportunity to re-look at your role as a whole. Perhaps the new boss will be more open on the internal development of staff – would they be willing to send you for training. However, don't bombard them with this request on their first day! Let them settle in first.

The boss will take a little time to find their way around – it is a steep learning curve for them, too - as they often grapple with a new region, culture and even language. If you can help them 'learn the ropes' that could be a favour repaid at a later date.

You might find that the new boss has such high hopes for their new team that not only do they set vigorous targets but they end up pushing you, to test your limits. Of course, try to show you are up to the challenge but if you feel it is all rather too much, you might need to define the limits of your role. Have a chat and clarify what you think your responsibilities include and therefore what new demands you might find hard to cover. Sometimes the new boss may just be unaware that they are placing what you feel are unreasonable demands on you. Asking for, or sharing, your existing job description with them may help.

Remember, any change at work can be unsettling and it may be human nature to be suspicious of the new boss, but if you are willing to give them a chance to prove their worth, then maybe they will be more willing to give you that chance, too!

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